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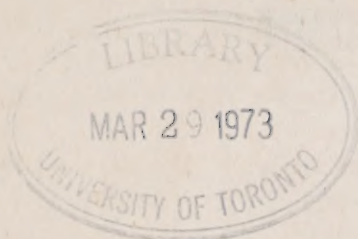
THE
ALL-INDIA THEISTIC CONFERENCE

CALCUTTA SESSION
1911.

Satya Gupta.

Price Ten Annas

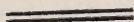
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THE ALL-INDIA THEISTIC CONFERENCE.

The Theistic Conference today is twenty-four years old. It originated at Allahabad in December of 1888. The presence of a large number of representative Brahmo gentlemen from various parts of the country at Allahabad on the occasion of the session of the Indian National Congress was taken advantage of, and a Brahmo Conference was then organised. Over a hundred Brahmo gentlemen and some visitors attended the meeting, which was held in the Colonelganj School premises ; and the local members, though few, arranged with the help of a friend from the Punjab to hold the conference and to give an entertainment to the assembled friends. After divine service conducted by Pandit Lachman Prasad, the Hon'ble Mr. M. G. Ranade was voted to the chair. Besides the chairman, the Hon'ble Mr. A. M. Bose, Mrs. A. M. Bose, Babu Bipinbehari Bose of Lucknow, Mr. Baldeonarain of Behar, Pandit S. N. Agnihotri of Lahore and a few others spoke each on the work of the Brahmo Samaj in his Province. It was resolved that a Conference might be held every year in the place where the Indian National Congress happened to hold its session. Pandit S. N. Sastri was elected Secretary for the next year.

The Second Conference was held in December 1889 in Bombay in an organised manner. Pandit S.N. Sastri, M.A., as Secretary, had issued circular letters to all Samajes to join and to communicate the subjects which they wanted to be discussed at the Conference. The meetings were held in the Mandir of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj at Girgaum and the attendance was large. Representatives from the Samajes of Madras, Coimbatore, Bellary, Poona, Ahmednagar, Pandharpur, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Indore, Nasik, Lahore, Quetta, Hyderabad (Sindh), Dumaron, Karachi, Dhubri, Bagerhat, Calcutta and Shillong were present. Rev. P. C. Mazoomdar came down from Calcutta to participate in the proceedings. Pandit S. N. Sastri was present as Secretary. Several addresses were delivered and some resolutions were passed, the most important of which was one for the establishment of a Theistic Union with the object of promoting co-operation amongst the different Theistic bodies by means of

(a) Holding united services and social gatherings.

(b) Joint efforts for the propagation of the common principles of Theism and also for the promotion of the general interest of its members.

(c) Combining for the promotion of common philanthropic and charitable objects and ;

(d) Such other measures as may suggest themselves from time to time.

The late Pandit Navinchandra Roy was appointed Secretary of the Union.

The Third Conference was held in Calcutta in December 1890. The inaugural meeting was held on Sunday, the 28th December 1890, at 52-2 Park Street, the residence of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. Babu Dwijendranath Tagore welcomed the delegates. After the address of welcome, Divine Service was commenced with a hymn by Babu Rabindranath Tagore. The whole assembly was led by the Maharshi himself in reciting the adoration and the prayer. The Maharshi pronounced a benediction in Sanskrit. The meeting was subsequently addressed by the late Mr. M. G. Ranade and Rev. P. C. Mazoomdar. The second meeting was held at the City College Hall on the 30th December under the Presidentship of the late Babu Gunabhiram Barua of Assam. The third meeting was held at the City College Hall on the 31st December, when the late Babu Haradaya Roy was voted to the chair. The conference expressed sorrow at the death of their Secretary, Pandit Navinchandra Ray and passed several resolutions. Pandit S. N. Sastri was elected the General Secretary for the next year with two Assistant Secretaries. A working committee was also formed. A very important resolution was passed this year to the effect that the working committee be asked to consider the question of the raising of the age of

consent of unmarried girls in consultation with the leaders of the different Theistic Churches in India and, if advisable, to send up a memorial to Government on the subject.

The Fourth Theistic Conference was held at Nagpur on the 31st December 1891 in the reading-room of the delegates to the National Congress. The attendance was meagre and there was not much enthusiasm. As there was no local theistic organisation, it was difficult to arrange for meetings and nothing seems to have been done except the appointment of a General Working Committee with the late Messrs. V. A. Modak and S. P. Kelkar as Joint-Secretaries.

The Fifth Theistic Conference was held in 1892 at Allahabad, the place of its origin ; but as there was no regular Samaj at that place and workers were very few the attendance at the Conference was not large. A prayer meeting was held on the first day, the 29th December, at the house of Mr. Roshanlal. The second meeting was held on the 30th December at the bungalow of Babu Charu Chandra Mitra. The third meeting was held at the shamiana of the Congress Camp, under the presidentship of Mr. Nagarkar of Bombay. Mr. V. A. Modak was appointed Secretary and Messrs. S. P. Kelkar and C. N. Bhatta as Joint-Secretaries.

No Conference was held in the year 1893, in which year the Congress was held at Lahore. In 1894, the Conference was held in Madras. It

met at the quarters of the Bombay delegates to the National Congress on the 29th December. Dr. Bhandarkar presided. About forty Theists, mostly belonging to the Madras Presidency, were present. All the theists assembled in the S. I. Brahmo Samaj Mandir to witness a Brahmo marriage. The service was conducted by Dr. Bhandarkar. The evening Sunday service was conducted by Prof. Heramba Chandra Maitra, M.A. The concluding divine service of the Theistic Conference was conducted by Mr. Ramanuja Chariar. In 1895, the Theistic Conference was held at Poona from the 26th December to 30th December. when the following was the programme : 26th—Opening service ; 27th—At a 'meeting several subjects were discussed ; 30th—Conversation at Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar's Sangamasrama.

In 1896 the Theistic Conference met for the second time in Calcutta. This year no previous arrangements had been made as on the first occasion. A Conference was held in the Sadharan 'Brahmo Samaj Mandir on the 30th December. The proceedings commenced with a hymn and short prayer, after which the Hon'ble Mr. A. M. Bose, on behalf of the Theists of Calcutta, accorded a warm welcome to the assembled Theists from the other Provinces. The Hon. Mr. Justice Ranade was elected President. Rao Bahadur C. N. Bhat from the Bombay Presidency, Mr. M. S. Advani from Karachi, Mr. Ram Chandra Keshav of Indore,

Mr. A. C. Mojumdar of Lahore made short speeches descriptive of the condition of the Samajes in their respective provinces. The Rev. James Harwood, who was present, also addressed the meeting. In 1897, the National Congress met at Amraoti, where a Conference could not be arranged. In 1898, the Conference was held at Madras for the second time. Two meetings were held on the 30th and 31st December at the residence of the Hon. Mr. M. G. Ranade. There was a large audience composed of delegates from several Samajes and visitors. Among those present were the Hon. Mr. M.G. Ranade, Messrs. Ramananda Chatterji, R. Venkataratnam Naidu, M.A., H.Narain Rao, B.A.,B.L., V. Govindan B.A., Rao Bahadur Viresalingam Pantulu, Rev. S. Fletcher Williams. Rao Bahadur Viresalingam Pantulu was elected Chairman. Messrs. R. Venkataratnam Naidu, Ramananda Chatterji, S. P. Narasimhlu Naidu of Coimbatore and the Hon'ble Mr. M. G. Ranade delivered addresses ; and several Resolutions were passed. The proceedings concluded with a benediction by the Hon. Justice Ranade.

The two following years, 1899 and 1900, no Theistic Conference was held either at Lucknow or at Lahore, where the Indian National Congress met. In the year 1901, the Conference met for the third time in Calcutta. This time the Conference was very successful. Mr Satyendranath Tagore was elected Chairman of the Reception

Committee and the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chandavarkar was elected President of the Conference. The meetings were held in the City College Hall. A grand reception was given to the President at the Howrah Railway station. The *Indian Social Reformer* of Bombay wrote about this year's Conference as follows: "The Theistic Conference, organised by the Calcutta Theists, was the occasion of much inspiring intercourse with some of the best minds of the country. It more than others impressed one with the fact that in spite of all our shortcomings there are men and women in India at the present day who live for the ideal. The Theists of India have a great future before them, and we look upon the Theistic Conference as the most important of all our national organisations." Prof. B. N. Sen, M.A., read a paper on the position and prospects of Theism in India on the 27th December 1901. Another paper on Theistic mission work was read by Dr. V. Rai on 28th December. An evening party was held at 6, Dwarkanath Tagore's Lane, when over 250 ladies and gentlemen, many of whom were delegates and visitors from the mofussil, were present. A dinner party was given at the City College, at which over 50 delegates were present.

In 1902, the Conference was held at Ahmedabad where good arrangements were made by the energetic secretary, Mr. Ramanbhai Mahipatram. There were two sittings presided over by

Dr Bhandarkar and Rao Bahadur Lalsankar Umaisankar. Though there were not many delegates from other provinces, the Bombay Presidency was fairly well represented. Eight resolutions were passed.

In 1903, the Conference was held in Madras. This was the third Conference in Southern India. The Conference was held on the 29th and 30th December. It was attended by representatives and visitors from the following places: Bombay, Indore, Calcutta, Kakina, Midnapore, Bogra, Secunderabad, Parlakimedi, Cocanada, Dinajpore, Mangalore, Tinnevely, Cuddalore, Nellore, Bapatla, Bezvada, Masulipatam Rajahmundry, Parchoor, Tenali, Sattenapalli and Russelkonda. Several resolutions were passed.

In 1904, it was the turn of Bombay to organise the Conference and a very successful session was held in the capital of Western India. There were representatives from Bengal, the Punjab, Sindh, Madras and Guzerat. Though the formal proceedings of the Conference were confined to the 27th and 28th December, the whole week was practically devoted to the work of the Conference. Divine Service was conducted at the Prarthana Samaj every morning. Bhai Prakash Dev conducted service and delivered a stirring sermon on the morning of 25th December. He also delivered a lecture on the 27th. The Conference was formally opened on the 28th morning, when the Hon. Mr. Justice

Chandavarkar, as President of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj, cordially welcomed the delegates. Dr. Bhandarkar was elected President of the Conference. Babu Hemchandra Sarkar, M.A., delivered a lecture on the Mission of the Brahmo Samaj. The Conference met at noon, when Dr. Bhandarkar delivered his presidential address. It was followed by short speeches by representatives on the growth and prospects of Theism in their respective provinces,—Bhai Prakash Dev and Prof. Ruchiram Sahni, M.A., speaking about the Punjab. Messrs V. R. Shinde and Ramanbhai Mahipatram about Bombay, Messrs. G. Subba Rao and D. V. Prakasa Rao about Madras, Prof. N. C. Mitra about Behar, Lala Kashi Ram and Babu Hemchandra Sarkar on the prospects of Theism in India generally. One of the delightful functions in connection with the Conference was a love-feast. The dinner, at which His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda was present, was a great success. It had been first arranged that the members of the Arya Samaj and the delegates to the Social Conference would join in the dinner, Seth Damodardas of the Prarthana Samaj offering to bear all the expenses; the Secretary of the Bombay Arya Samaj, had accepted the invitation on behalf of 150 members of his Samaj. But in the end they withdrew because amongst the guests there was a Brahmo convert from Mahomedanism. There were afterdinner speeches

one of which was from His Highness the Gaekwar.

In December 1905, the Theistic Conference was held at Benares. It was apprehended that the absence of a Brahmo Samaj at Benares would render it difficult to make the Conference successful there. But happily the apprehension proved groundless, Babu Gurudas Chakravarti of Bankipur and Babu Mahendra Nath Sarkar of Cawnpore made the necessary arrangements. A large number of ladies and gentlemen from all parts of India assembled and they were all located in the spacious building of the London Mission High School, in Benares Cantonment. Seventy five representatives from different Samajes were present. The Conference commenced on the 24th with sankirtan and divine service, and concluded on the 31st with a pritibhojan. In the absence of Dr. Bhandarkar, Chairman of the Conference Committee, Prof. Ruchiram Sahni welcomed the delegates, on behalf of the reception committee. Pandit Sivanath Sastri was elected President of the Conference. On the 27th Divine service was conducted by Rev. Promotho Lal Sen. In the afternoon there was a very successful Nagar Sankirtan. On the 28th Divine service was conducted by Babu Umesh Chandra Datta. Mr Desai of Indore read a thoughtful paper on the relation of the Brahmo Samaj to Hinduism.

In the December of 1906, the Theistic Conference

was held in Calcutta, and arrangements for the reception of the delegates were made on a liberal scale, worthy of the head-quarters of the Brahmo Samaj. The Conference this year was an unprecedented success. A very large number of delegates representing every part of India and numbering over two hundred were present. There were two establishments for the accommodation of the delegates, one at the City College, where most of those from outside Bengal were put up, the other at the Victoria Institution. Divine Service was held at the City College for the delegates every morning and evening for several days. Prof. Heramba Chandra Maitra, M.A., conducted service on the first day. In the evening an interesting prayer meeting was held in which hymns were sung and prayers were offered in Bengali, Telugu, Sindhi, Hindustani and English. Prof. Benoyendranath Sen, M.A., also conducted the service one morning. The Conference met at the spacious Hall of the City College. The hall was packed with a large number of ladies and gentlemen. Among the audience were also a few European ladies and gentlemen, and by a happy coincidence Mr. G. Brown, a member of the Executive Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, happened to be in Calcutta and attended the Conference with his sister. The proceedings commenced with a hymn sung by Rev. Bhai Trailokyanath Sanyal, followed by a prayer by Babu Umeshchandra Dutta.

H. H. the Maharaja of Mourbhanj, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, read a thoughtful address. Mr. R. Venkataratnam, M.A., L.T., was elected President of the Conference and delivered an eloquent address. Resolutions were passed expressing regret at the death of Mr. A. M. Bose, Mr. Maheschandra Sen and Mr. S. P. Kelkar of Indore. Several Resolutions were passed as in previous years. Pandit S. N. Sastri read a very thoughtful paper on "Has the Brahmo Samaj lost its hold on the educated classes, and if so, why?" A very interesting and lively discussion followed, in which Justice Chandavarkar, Mr. K. Natarajan, Mr. Donald, Judge of the Bombay Small Cause Court, Babu Gurudas Chakravarti, Prof Ruchiram and the President took part. The proceedings of the next morning commenced with a short but very inspiring service and sermon by Justice Chandavarkar. The question of the condition of the mofussil Samajes was introduced by Babu Prakashchandra Roy. He was followed by several speakers from different Provincial Samajes. In the evening there was a public meeting, and addresses on the message and mission of the Brahmo Samaj were delivered by Justice N. G. Chandavarkar, Professors T.L. Vaswani, Benoyendra Nath Sen and Herambachandra Maitra. On the morning of Saturday, the 24th December, the usual divine service was conducted by Babu Brahma Narayan. A resolution expressive

of regret at the sudden death of the Right Hon'. Mr Samuel Smith was unanimously passed, followed by several resolutions. The Conference closed with a *prtibhojan* in the evening.

In 1907, the Theistic Conference was held at Surat. The name of the Brahmo Samaj was not much known there and it was apprehended that the public meetings organised by the Conference would not be well attended ; but the facts belied the apprehension. The two public meetings which were held in the Town Hall were very largely attended. The number of delegates and visitors was also satisfactory. The formal proceedings of the Conference commenced on the evening of the 25th December when Swami Swatmananda of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj conducted the opening service. The following morning, Babu A. C. Majumdar of Lahore conducted divine service and preached the Conference Sermon. In the evening the Conference met in the Town Hall. Rao Bahadur Lalshankar Umiashankar of Ahmedabad welcomed the delegates and explained the object of the Theistic Conference in Gujarati. Mr. Satyendranath Tagore was elected President of the Conference and he delivered a lengthy address which was much appreciated. The delegates and visitors met for conference in the Raichand Deepchand School on the morning of the 27th. In the unavoidable absence of the President, Prof. Ruchiram Sahni, M.A., of Lahore was voted to the

Chair and several Resolutions were passed as in previous years. A resolution was passed organising famine relief work on behalf of the Conference with a sub-committee with Babu A. C. Majumdar as Secretary. A separate report of the Famine Relief work has already been published. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, which was largely attended. Mr. Tagore was in the chair. Dr R. G. Bhandarkar, Justice N. G. Chandavarkar, Mr. N. D. Kavi and Prof. Ruchiram addressed the meeting in eloquent terms in different languages. The Conference met again on the morning of the 29th December and resolutions were passed concerning various subjects affecting the welfare of the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes in India.

In 1908, the Conference was held in Madras. Mr. Ullal Raghunathaya, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and visitors in a very thoughtful speech at a public meeting held in the Anderson Memorial Hall. Babu A. C. Majumdar of Lahore was elected President and delivered his address. Two other public meetings were held at which Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. V. R. Shinde, Mr. Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth and Lala Dharamdas Suri gave brilliant addresses. Prof. T. Davis of Colombo, a member of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, also took an active part in the proceedings. A demonstration on behalf of the Depressed Classes was also organised on the

30th under the presidentship of M.R.Ry Rao Bahadur M. Adinarayaniah of Madras. The Conference meetings were held in the Brahma Mandir and the public meetings in the Memorial Hall. The opening and closing services were conducted by the President. The Conference Sermon was preached by Mr. V. R. Shinde. Resolutions were passed as usual. A report of famine relief work was presented by the secretary, and it was decided that with Rs. 250, the balance of the Famine Fund, deposited in a Bank, the nucleus of a Permanent Distress Relief Fund be formed. The success of this session of the Conference was partly due to the liberal contribution of Rs. 500 from the Raja of Pithapur, who with his characteristic generosity relieved the organisers of their financial anxiety.

In 1909, the Theistic Conference was held at Lahore. This was the first time that a Conference could be arranged in the Punjab. A fair number of delegates from the Punjab and other provinces were assembled and were very comfortably quartered and entertained by the local committee and its devoted Secretary, Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar, assisted by his wife. The Conference opened with Divine Service on the 25th December by Bhai Prokash Dev, who preached a stirring sermon. The addresses of the Chairman of the of the Reception Committee, Lala Kashiram, as well as of the President, Babu Benoyendra Nath Sen, were delivered on the 27th December

before a large audience. Profesor Sen had gone to Lahore at a great personal sacrifice immediately after the death of his father. His heart was full of sorrow and the pathos of his utterance thrilled all with deep emotion. One special fact worthy of mention about the Conference was that two delegates were sent by H. H. the Gaekwar of Baroda to attend the proceedings of the Conference ; and they left deeply impressed with the importance of the Theistic movement in India. The usual resolutions were passed at the several sittings of the Conference.

THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1910-11.

The 18th session of the All-India Theistic Conference was held at Allahabad from the 25th to the 28th December, 1910. Babu Abinashchandra Mazumdar, Joint General Secretary of the Conference came to Allahabad over three weeks before the date of the Conference to make the necessary arrangements. He had to contend against many difficulties, the chief of which was that of securing a suitable place for the residence of the delegates and a hall for the meetings of the Conference. After a period of much anxiety he succeeded in securing the premises of the Colonelganj Bengali School on contribution of Rs 200 to the funds of the School. The delegates were accomodated here, and most of the meetings were held in the School Hall. For the public meetings a *shamiana* was fitted up in the compound of Lawrenceganj. As there were not many local Theists, the whole burden of work fell upon Mr. Majumdar, who however received much help from some Bengali residents of the neighbourhood. Though the notice was very short, a fair number of delegates from Bengal, the Punjab, Bombay and Madras came and spent a few happy days together in sweet fellowship. There was a considerable difficulty about the President of the Conference. After a period of intense anxiety Pandit S. N. Sastri relieved the organisers by very kindly accepting the office at a very short notice, in spite of ill health and pressing engagements.

The session opened on the 25th December with a divine service conducted in Hindi by Bhai Prakash Dev of Lahore. In the afternoon a public meeting was held in the Lawrenceganj compound. The proceedings commenced with a hymn sung by Mrs. Sarala Devi, and a prayer offered by Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar. In the absence of Babu Nilmani Dhar, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, who was unavoidably detained owing to a railway accident, Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar welcomed the delegates in a short speech. Pandit S. N. Sastri was then elected President and delivered his address, which was much appreciated. On the 26th morning there was a divine service conducted by Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra. In the evening a public meeting was held when Babu Nilmani Dhar read a paper and short speeches were delivered by Lala Raghunath Sahai, Prof. Ruchiram Sahni, Mr. V. R. Shinde, Mr. L. Ghantee and the President. On the 27th morning there was a divine service. At noon there was a meeting for ladies. In the evening the business session of the Conference was held at 5 P. M. with Pandit S. N. Sastri in the chair. A large number of delegates and visitors were present. The proceedings commenced with a prayer by Bhai Prakash Dev of Lahore. In the absence of a written report Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar, the Joint General Secretary gave a verbal account of the work of the year which was taken as a report with thanks.

The President called upon Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar of Calcutta to introduce the Draft Constitution. In introducing the Constitution Babu Hem Chandra

Sarkar said, that at the meeting of the Subjects Committee. on the 25th December a Sub-Committee consisting of Babu Nritya Gopal Ray, Mr. V. R. Shinde, Lala Raghunath Sahai and himself had been formed with instructions to draft a Constitution for the Theistic Conference. The Sub-Committee had accordingly drafted a Constitution, which he begged to introduce to the Conference. The Draft Constitution was as follows :—

1. The Conference shall be called the All-India Theistic Conference.

2. Its object shall be the promotion of Theism in India by bringing together its adherents from different parts of the country on suitable occasions and such other means.

3. All persons duly elected delegates by any theistic organisation will be considered its members for the year following the Conference.

4. The work of the Conference shall be carried on by a Standing Committee consisting of the President of the previous Conference, four members and one, or if necessary, two Secretaries, who will be *ex-officio* members. The Committee and Secretaries will be elected annually at the Conference and will hold office till the appointment of their successors at the next Conference.

5. The Standing Committee will organise the annual sittings of the Conference, keep records of its proceedings, submit annual reports and accounts try to give effect to the Resolutions of the Conference and do any other work which the Conference might entrust them with.

6. The Standing Committee will have power to organise local committees consisting of representatives

of Theistic organisations in the province where the Conference of the year will be held, delegating to them such of their powers as they will think fit, for co-operation in the work of the year.

7. Any change in the Constitution may be made at a general meeting of the Conference by a majority, of the two-thirds of the members present.

The motion was seconded by Lala Raghunath Sahai B. A. of Lahore. Mr. Hassaram of Karachi proposed the following amendment, that the Conference be called All-India Brahmo Samaj Conference. It was seconded by Lala Dharmadas Suri B.L. of Lahore.

After some discussion the amendment was withdrawn on the understanding that the question of the name of the Conference will be settled after consulting the Samajes.

Babu Nibaran Chandra Ray M. A. of Calcutta, drew the attention of the Conference to the absence in the Draft Constitution of any definite procedure for the election of the President and proposed to suggest a scheme for the election of the President.

At this stage the President moved the following resolution which was carried unanimously :—

Resolved that the Draft Constitution be circulated to all the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes and other Theistic congregations allied to the Brahmo Samaj with a special mention of the question of the name of the Conference and the method of the election of President and be submitted to the next-Conference.

The next item before the Conference was the question of Mission Work which was introduced by Babu Hem

Chandia Sarkar. After briefly alluding to the need of mission work he proposed the following resolution :—

That this Conference of the delegates of Theistic organisations in India resolves that the mission work of the Brahmo Samaj be carried on with greater vigour and earnestness and that better provision be made for the training and maintenance of an adequate missionary body. It would suggest that every congregation should do something for the propagation of Brahmoism and that every member should spend at least 10 per cent of his income for religious and philanthropic purposes.

The resolution was seconded by Lala Beharilal Vasudev of Rawalpindi. Babu Nilmani Dhar of Agra proposed that, 1 should be substituted in the place of 10 in the last part of the resolution. Babu Mahendra Nath Sarkar of Cawnpur seconded the amendment. Lala Raghunath Sahai B. A., proposed that the last portion of the resolution commencing from "It would suggest &c." be dropped. Babu Abinash Chandra Majumder of Lahore seconded the amendment. The last amendment was carried by a majority of votes.

Mr. V. R. Shinde of Bombay proposed :—

That the Standing Committee be directed to communicate with the several important Samajes to lend the services of their missionaries for a period of at least three months for work in some selected provinces.

Mr Dharamdas Suri moved that the subject be postponed to the next year's Conference. Mr Hassaran seconded it. The amendment was carried by a majority.

Babu Nilmani Dhar proposed :—

That the Conference feels the necessity of Brahmo Mission Work in the United provinces, and offers its grateful thanks to Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar for his offer to organise mission work in the United Provinces and recommends the United Provinces Brahmos to co-operate with him.

It was seconded by Babu Mahendra Nath Sarkar.

Carried unanimously.

Mr. V. R. Shinde proposed :—

That this Conference deems it desirable to preach Brahmoism among the masses.

Babu Rajkumar Sen of Dacca seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar proposed :—

That this Conference appreciates the work done by the Depressed Classes Mission Societies in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Mangalore, Dacca and other places and recommends their work to the sympathy and support of all the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes in the country. It was seconded by Babu Lalit Mohan Sen of Ranchi and Carried unanimously.

Babu Gurudas Chakravarti of Dacca proposed :—

That in order to make the Brahmo Samaj a power in the land practical steps should be taken by the Conference to unite all Theists with one ideal as laid down by the great leaders of the Brahmo Samaj i. e. to live for God, to live in God, to live with God.

It was seconded by Babu Prativa Ranjan Ray of Bankipore.

Lala Raghunath Sahai proposed :—

That this Conference feels that the time has come for the closer union of Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes in India and hopes that all the Samajes would, in order to bring about this union, make such efforts as they deem proper.

It was seconded by Babu Beni Madhab Das of Cuttack
Carried.

Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar presented a representation regarding the amendment of Act III of 1872 from a large number of members of the Brahmo Samajes in the West Coast of the Madras Presidency, and also gave a brief account of the steps that have been taken by the Brahmo Samaj Committee of Calcutta on the matter.

Lala Dharmadas Suri proposed :—

That this Conference thanks the Brahmo Samaj Committee for what they have done in the matter of the amendment of Act III of 1872 and begs to forward to them the representation from the members of the Brahmo Samajes in the West Coast of the Madras Presidency with the request that if possible they will try to get the Act amended at an early date.

It was seconded by Babu Brojendra Nath Sen, and carried unanimously.

On behalf of the Secretaries Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar stated that Dr. P. K. Ray of Calcutta had sent a copy of a pamphlet on Brahmo Samaj and Spiritual Education for consideration by the Conference of the proposals therein put forward and proposed the following resolution :—

That the Theistic Conference recognises the urgent

necessity of more systematic and effective provision for the moral and religious education of Brahmo children. It heartily supports the proposal of Dr. P. K. Ray for establishing a boarding school for Brahmo children, a theological college for the training of teachers and preachers. It also suggests that in connection with every Theistic congregation there should be institutions for the religious training of Brahmo children and young men.

It was seconded by Babu Nibaran Chandra Ray and supported by Mr. Hassaram.

Carried unanimously.

Lala Dharmadas Suri proposed :—

That the Maghotsab be observed by all the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes.

Seconded by Mr Hassaram.

Carried.

Babu Rajkumar Sen proposed :—

That Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar be elected General Secretary for the next year and that a Joint General Secretary be elected by the Standing Committee having regard to the province where the next Conference will be held.

It was seconded by Babu Mahendranath Sarkar.

Carried unanimously,

Mr. B. G. Trivedi proposed :—

That for this year the Standing Committee would consist of seven members besides the office-bearers.

It was seconded by Mr. Ok of Poona.

Lala Dharmadas Suri proposed !—

That the Standing Committee be formed with four

representatives from Bengal, two from Bombay, one from Behar, one from Scindh, two from the Punjab, one from the United Provinces, two from Madras.

It was seconded by Mr Hassaram.

The amendment was negatived by a majority of votes and the original proposal was carried.

Lala Raghunath Shahai proposed :—

That the following gentlemen will form the Standing Committee of the present year :—Messrs V. R. Shinde, A. C. Majumdar, Benoyendranath Sen, Venkat Ratnam nam Naidu, Gurudas Chakravarti, Nritya Gopal Ray, and Dewan Kauramal.

Mr. Hassaram proposed :—

That the following gentlemen will form the Standing Committee : Messrs Heramba Chandra Maitra, S. N. Tagore, Benoyendranath Sen, Venkat Ratnam Naidu, Dharmadas Suri, V. R. Sinde, T. L. Vaswani,

It was seconded by Babu Prativa Ranjan Ray. The amendment was negatived by a majority of votes and the original proposal was carried.

Babu Nilmani Dhar proposed :—

That the Conference conveys its grateful thanks to Babu Abinash Chadra Majumdar for the great trouble and labour he has undergone in arranging the Conference. It was seconded by Mr. Hassaram and carried unanimously. The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks to the President, proposed by Lala Raghunath Sahai and seconded by Babu Nilmani Dhar and carried by acclamation.

On the 28th morning Babu Nritya Gopal Ray conducted divine service and in the afternoon Pandit S. N.

Sastri delivered a lecture in Bengali on the New Aspirations of New India. The Conference concluded with a love-feast in the evening.

According to a Resolution of the Conference Rev. Brojo Gopal Neogi was elected Joint General Secretary at the suggestion of Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar unanimously approved by the members of the Standing Committee.

The Draft Constitution of the Conference was circulated as directed by the last Conference among the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes of the country. Replies from fifteen samajes have been received and shall be placed before the Conference.

One thousand copies of the Presidential address have been printed and offered for sale at a very low price. About four hundred copies have been disposed of.

Towards the end of October last the General Secretaries called a meeting of the adherents of the Theistic movement in Calcutta for concerting measures to organise the present session of the Conference. The meeting, which was held on the 28th October, appointed a strong and representative Reception Committee with Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar, Rev. Brojo Gopal Neogi and Babu Sudhindranath Tagore as Secretaries to make necessary arrangements for the present session of the Conference. Letters inviting suggestions and appointments of delegates were addressed to the Secretaries of Theistic organisations ; a good many of them have replied.

ACCOUNTS FOR 1910.

RECEIPTS.

					Rs.	As.	P.
	Balance of Theistic Conference, 1908 (Madras)	...			119	12	0
2.	Do. Do. 1909 (Lahore)	...			100	0	0
3.	Contributions by Samajes	...			284	14	0
4.	Individual donations	...			222	12	0
5.	Receipts from the delegates of the Conference	...			273	0	0
6.	" " Sale of articles at reduced rates	...			82	2	6
7.	" " Miscellaneous	...			1	2	0
					1083	10	6
	Expenses	...			1044	15	0
	Balance	...			38	11	6

EXPENSES.

					Rs.	As.	P.
	Rent of School Building for the delegates	...			200	0	0
	Railway fare to Missionaries	...			110	0	0
	Hire of tents	...			69	3	0
	Hire of chairs	...			35	7	3
	Servants wages	...			43	5	6
	Printing charges	...			25	0	0
	Telegrams	...			43	3	6
	Ekka & gari hire for workers	...			13	7	0
	Kerosine Oil	...			4	8	0
	Charpays Lamps Shamiana cloth which were subsequently sold	...			116	9	0
	Provisions	...			350	4	3
	Miscellaneous	...			33	15	6
					1044	15	0

CONTRIBUTIONS BY SAMAJES.

		Rs.	As.	P.
Prarthana Samaj, Bombay	...	50	0	0
Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta	...	28	0	0
New Dispensation Samaj, Calcutta	...	10	0	0
Young Theists Union, Bombay	...	5	0	0
Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Quetta	...	38	8	0
Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Sealkote	...	2	0	0
Brahmo Samaj, Indore	...	5	6	0
„ Mymensingh	...	2	0	0
„ Bangalore Cant	...	5	0	0
„ Dinajpore	...	2	0	0
„ Dacca	...	10	0	0
„ Madras	...	10	0	0
„ Coconada	...	10	0	0
„ Mangalore	...	22	0	0
„ Contai	...	3	0	0
„ Berhampore (Ganjam)	...	20	0	0
„ Pithapuram	...	4	0	0
„ Calicut	...	4	0	0
„ Deoghur	...	5	0	0
„ Kumarkhali	...	1	0	0
„ Faridpur	...	3	0	0
„ Barisal	...	5	0	0
„ Kirkee	...	5	0	0
„ Ghazipore	...	10	0	0
„ Cuttack	...	10	0	0
„ Ranchi	...	5	0	0
„ Giridih	...	5	0	0
Prarthana Samaj Poona	...	5	0	0
Total of Receipts from Samajes	...	284	14	0

DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL PERSONS.

		Rs.	As.	P.
R. B. Madhusudan Rao Cattack	...	25	0	9
Babu Ishanchandra Deb DehraDun	...	25	0	0
„ A. C. Majumdar	...	10	0	0
„ Atalchandra Majumdar, Allahabad	...	6	0	0
Miss K. Nowrangee, Bombay	...	5	0	0
Mr. W. W. Nowrange, Bomay	...	5	0	0
Dr. Pandit Ralaram Pal, Burmah	...	5	0	0
Sardar Krepa Singh Montgomery	...	5	0	0
Mr. Virumal, Sukkur	...	10	0	0
Prof. B. N Sen, Calcutta	...	10	0	0
Brahmos from Bankipore	...	16	0	0
Dewan Tahlram Lilaram, Hyderabad (Sindh)	...	10	0	0
Babu Pareshnath Banerji, Simla	...	5	0	0
Lala Shivdayal M.A., Delhi	...	10	0	0
Bahu N. N. Neogi, Lahore	...	2	0	0
Lala Ram Rakhamal, Lahore	...	1	0	0
Major B. D. Basu, Allahabad	...	10	0	0
Mrs. T. C. Das „	...	2	0	0
Babu Kedarnath Mandal, Allahabad	...	5	0	0
Mr. V. N. Ghumre „	...	5	0	0
„ A. P. Sen Lucknow	...	20	0	0
„ S. K. Lahiri „	...	10	0	0
„ & Mrs. Joshi „	...	4	0	0
„ Pramathanath Ghoshal „	...	2	0	0
„ S. K. Sen „	...	2	12	0
Dr. B. B. Bose „	...	2	0	0
Babu Bhubanmohan Roy „	...	5	0	0
Dr. N. K. Dhar, Barabanki „	...	5	0	0
		222	12	0

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 19TH
SESSION OF THE
All-India Theistic Conference.

The 19th session of the All-India Theistic Conference was held at the City College, Calcutta from the 26th to 29th December, 1911. The session commenced with a divine service on the 26th Dec. at 7-40 P.M. conducted by Babu Benoyendranath Sen M. A. who also preached the Conference sermon.

In the evening the specious Hall of the City College was packed to its utmost capacity with delegates and visitors from various parts of the country. Among the visitors was Dr. Rudolph Otto, of Gottingen, who had come to Calcutta specially to attend the meetings of the Conference. The proceedings of the evening commenced with a hymn by a choir of ladies and gentlemen, after which Mr. S. N. Tagore, (Retired I. C. S.) conducted divine service in Sanskrit. Babu Heramba Chandra Maitra M. A., Chairman of the Reception Committee then welcomed the delegates in a thoughtful and inspiring address *

Pandit S. N. Sastri proposed Mr. Ullal Raghunathaya, President and Minister of the Mangalore

* We are very sorry that both the Conference sermon and the Address of the Chairman of the Reception Committee could not be reported.

Brahmo Samaj to be the President of the Conference. The proposal was seconded by Babu AbinashChandra Majumdar of Lahore and supported by Mr. D. V. Prakash Rao of Cocanada. The proposal being accepted with acclamation Mr. Raghunathaya read the following address :—

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

Dear Sisters and Brethren,

My first feelings on this occasion are of profound thankfulness to the Giver of all good, in that He has blessed me with sufficient strength at this advanced age of mine, to come all along from my place to this city, to take part in this great Conference, for the first, and probably, the last time. It was one of my early ambitions, and it was ever a dream of my life, to pay a visit to the Metropolis of the Indian Empire, not because it was the seat of Government, or the centre of trade and commerce, which in themselves would amply reward the visit, but because it was the birth place of the greatest religious movement of modern India, so far as I am concerned, and the centre of all those beneficent and healthy activities which are essential to the regeneration of our mother-land. You may know that among our elders there was a superstition, that one must see Benares or Kasi before he dies, and a visit to Benares on pilgrimage was considered

to wash away all sins, and it almost amounted to a superstition with me that I must for once visit Calcutta and see the Brahmo Samaj and the Brahmo families in their own homes. Brahmo Missionaries from Calcutta have visited us often, and I must here gratefully acknowledge the services rendered by them to us, but I was not satisfied and I consider this as a glorious day, when it has pleased God, to enable me to realise my dream. I never thought however, that I would ever have to take a leading part in a Conference of this kind ; my aim was of a humbler sort, to make a pilgrimage to this sacred city, cultivate acquaintance and friendship with all loving and devout souls, and be a silent spectator of what went on around me. I am however denied all this, and I am on the other hand entrusted with an onerous task which I myself feel, more than any other, I am not at all able to fulfill. When added to this, I find that the place which I am called upon to occupy, was occupied by those who were far worthier and better than myself, I feel my awkwardness the more in having accepted the place, and I would gladly prefer to seek my obscurity, to being exposed to the light of observation and criticism from others. The only thing that counterbalances the want of my ability and attainments, in the discharge of my duty, is the fact that I am after all in the all-embracing love of my God, and

my friends. However weak and deficient I may be in the breadth of my thought and the power of expression, I am sure that I can count upon your indulgence and kindness. I have to thank you all for the honour you have been pleased to confer on me by electing me as your President and I am led to think that it is more your generosity and kindness that led you to choose me than my deserts.

Of all the movements that have come into existence within the last three generations and have for their object the regeneration of our country I consider the Theistic movement the noblest and destined to achieve the greatest results. It has a great future before it, and is of supreme importance and necessity in our modern conditions. It forms the foundation, as it were, upon which other structures have to be built ; and without a well-laid foundation however much we may attempt to achieve greatness and success, the other movements will have to fall. The political, social, industrial, educational and other allied movements are, it is true, conducive to our well-being and prosperity ; but unless they are broad-based and founded upon the eternal verities of Nature, and appeal to our higher and nobler impulses will not stand the test of time and will die an early death. Be it in an individual or in a nation the function performed by religion is of

primary importance, since it concerns itself with the very being and is an essential condition of life. It has for its background the whole vista of Nature and the History of Nations in various stages of civilization and for its future potentialities rich enough to bring forth a good harvest. Religion has for its object the Sublime Faith in the Immanence of the All-pervading Spirit, and the working of that Spirit as manifested in the whole Universe including human beings. The interpretation of the method of work may differ and there may be nice shades of opinion about the nature of that work. Without a firm grounding in the essentials of religion and the casting of our character in the spiritual mould our natures are apt to become half-developed and inharmonious and our visions will be narrow and one-sided. Any attempt at improvement of our condition made to take its stand upon the narrow basis of Self-interest will only end in mutual destruction; for it is the character of selfishness to be exclusive in its conflict with other interests of a like nature. It was therefore a wise provision in the Hindu system of culture in its palmy days, that students were given tuition in spiritual truths from their boyhood in the most impressionable period of their life, so that the habit of thought that may cling to them in early life may never leave them afterwards. Though at subsequent stages of Hindu civilization the

education thus given degraded itself into mere ceremonialism and a learning by *rote* of the texts necessary to perform the various rites—and its relics are even now to be found among Brahmins in the ceremony of investiture of the sacred thread in the eighth year,—yet the importance lies in the fact that religion was not relegated as the weakness of an old and decrepit mind, but was considered to be an essential factor and a condition precedent to the life of a householder. With the majority among us we consider religious training unnecessary and we think we are competent to meet the battle of life without any such preparation ; but with our ancestors it was not so. The ceremony itself was meant as “Second Vision” উপনয়ন *i.e.*, an insight into the secret of things and the *Mantra* or the text by which the boy is initiated by the parent on the occasion fully deserves all the eulogy bestowed on it by *Savants* and western Scholars. The practice of imparting religious knowledge in early years exists more or less in the system of all nations who have attained to some degree of civilisation, but among other nations it has not left so deep a mark as among the Hindus who may be said to have carried it to excess. In the latter days of Hindu civilization the original meaning of the several Canons of morality and spiritual truth and the conditions of society to which they were addressed were lost sight of and these were

mistaken for the forms in which they were clothed and the forms themselves assumed a sacredness and were considered to be the end in themselves amidst the surrounding ignorance. With all these faults and weakness in the Hindu civilization and the damage caused to the advancement of the people in consequence, it cannot be denied that the genius of the Hindu race is spiritual, and the religious spirit is deeply imbedded among the mass of the people, so that any endeavour to uplift the masses has to be done through the agency of religion. Any other movement therefore is not likely to take deep root in the soil as the religious one, and we realise this when we contemplate the effects of such movements on the people as have not religion for their assistance. I have only to refer to those revolutionary and other secular movevents of which one finds an account in the history of Continental Europe. With us, Indians, the things of world were never at any time objects of ambition, and after a century of contact with western civilization and secular education we are even now accused of being metaphysical and visionary, always bent upon thinking of the Hereafter and the Future of our existence.

Whatever efforts may be made to infuse vigour and life in our social and other institutions, it turns out to be ephemeral and the effect is not

lasting. It is generally dependent on one or two individuals and when those individuals withdraw, the life too becomes extinct. It has to be admitted that this is the bane of our country and that it is the chief cause of our backwardness; but it only shows that we have to take this lethargy and indifference into account and operate upon its causes. Owing to this with many thinkers religion is a nightmare and is sufficient to scare them away from any proposal for reform in that direction. Any interference with religious matters is looked upon with grave misgivings, and is deemed to let loose all those sectarian animosities and jealousies which in other countries led to violence and bloodshed. Many reformers, therefore, while they are patriotic enough to understand the worth and the blessing which a properly organised church would confer, fight shy of the very name of religion, and view with suspicion the labour of those who work in the field of religion. It is one of the main reasons why workers in this field are so very few, for besides the want of an immediate return proportionate to the labour bestowed, there is the additional disadvantage that it goes against the conservative habits of the people whose views on various problems have been allowed to run into an accustomed rut and fall into a narrow groove. In these re-

gions, therefore, most of our energies have to be directed having regard to the interest at stake, and if no attempts are made on account of the difficulty of the work, we are doomed to vanish off the face of the earth. It was providential that the general awakeing of the Indian mind should have made itself first felt in matters of religion, and chronologically, if I am not mistaken, the Brahmo movement was the first of all the national endeavours of the modern age. There were all the materials necessary for national advancement,—there were wealth, rank, power and also intelligence, but they were all lost in the wilderness. There may have been individual progress and men who attained eminence of character, piety and devotion. But the mass or the majority were sunk in ignorance and even those who rose above the trammels engendered by superstition and ignorance were affected by the general contagion and only rose to fall again. The History of Ancient India as well as of the Medieval period teems with martyrs, saints, prophets, philosophers and statesmen who left their stamp on their own generation but the fact remains that with the exception of small classes of people the rest were not carried along with them. Knowledge was monopolised by a sacerdotal class and as in the Catholic countries in Medieval Europe the priest ruled the society. Worship and the study of

religious books were prohibited except to Brahmins. Even in our own days the force of injunction is felt and I may tell you that in my native place it was not long ago that a priest was suspended from caste for teaching the Vedas to the goldsmiths of the town. The publication of Vedic literature in the "Sacred Books of the East" at Oxford was ignored and would not open the eyes of the sacerdotal class that their monopoly of religious knowledge could no more be insisted upon and they must rise above their prejudices in the matter. When such is the case even now at the beginning of the twentieth century the state of things at the beginning of the last century had better be left to be imagined. The inertness of the mass was felt when it came in contact with the living force of the West and in the comparison made we had the worst, and it was perceived by the great minds of the age, notably by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, that herein lay the secret and before anything else, the conscience of the nation should be awakened, and the work along this line should be concentrated. The Theistic movement styled as Brahmo Samaj was started under these auspices, and with varying tides of fortune has continued up to this day and we have met to celebrate the annual Theistic Conference by taking stock of the work we have already done.

It has been often remarked that the Theistic Church, as it at present exists, is not at all suited to the requirements of the country and that it contains the seeds of destruction, that the religion it embodies is too high for the masses to follow, that its ideas of monotheistic worship and the equality which it allows to all classes, are foreign to the nature of the people among whom it is sought to be spread, and that consequently it is a passing thing of the moment and cannot last very long. In corroboration of this the division of the Church in three separate branches is pointed out, and it is seriously asked whether one should not try to set one's own house in order, before seeking to repair that of the neighbour. But whatever differences may exist, and however deplorable they be, I claim that the Theistic Church embodies and represents those spiritual ideals and principles which if properly practised, will serve to the emancipation of the intellect as well as of the heart of the nation from the thralldom of ages and raise it to a high pedestal. Let me try to enunciate what these principles are and whether they have got the efficacy which I attribute to them.

(a) Among its foremost principles is that the Supreme Spirit is one, Indivisible, and Immanent in the Universe, in Nature, as well as in the mind of man, and that the whole

Universe is the working of the Spirit, that it is man alone among all the sentient creatures that is capable of understanding it, that be it called Brahma by the Vedanta, or Jehova by the Jews or the Allah by the Mahammadans, it is the same by whatever name you call it.

(b) Secondly, that it requires no extraordinary faculties or powers to understand or know the Supreme Spirit ; that it is given to man with his ordinary powers to understand and know it by proper exercises of devotion and love.

(c) Thirdly, these exercises of devotion and love consist in uttering the names of God with a fervent heart and seeking Him in the recesses of one's own soul, in firmly believing that, He is always close by and hears our prayers, and that they never go unanswered.

(d) Fourthly, that to obtain grace and purification of mind and heart there is no necessity of a Mediator and that all perception is direct and immediate, and that communion with the Infinite is possible in this very existence, that communion consists in the altered attitude of the soul towards the Supreme Soul, that scriptures, lives of saints and their history, might assist you in your exercises of devotion and piety but can never supplant them.

(e) Fifthly, that ceremonies and rites have no efficacy in them, and are only so many hindrances

so far as they come in the way of realising the presence of God.

(*f*) Sixthly, that so far as the worship of God is concerned there is no distinction between class and class, high and low, rich and poor, aged and young, healthy and sick ; that God reveals Himself to those who approach Him with a penitent heart and an earnest desire.

(*g*) Seventhly, that spiritual truths are not the monopoly of any particular individual or race or age but God has been unfolding Himself always, that we have only to open our eyes in order to see Him and the glory of His work.

(*h*) Eighthly, that the service of God consists in the service we render to our fellow-beings, that the field for work and the exercise of all our high impulses and divine faculties is our own surroundings wherein we are required to work.

(*i*) Ninthly, that the reward of such service does not consist in fame or honour which are all of earth earthy, but in the blessedness we inwardly feel for the good work we have done and the peaceful rest we obtain at the close of our life.

(*j*) Tenthly and lastly, that this life is only a school and a preparation for a higher existence to come and all our joys and sorrows are meant to show the ephemeral character of our being.

The several spiritual ideals set forth above may be summed up in the three cardinal virtues of faith,

love and service,—faith in the one true God, all-loving, all-kind, sustaining and upholding the universe, love towards all the creatures whom He has brought forth into existence, and service which results in action towards the elevation and uplifting of humanity. The essence of it is selfless devotion and service in furtherance of the evolution which proceeds from the imperfect to the perfect, and from the less developed to the more developed in the direction of the Divine which is the fruition of all things. The ideal home wherein the principles I have enumerated are exercised and carried into practice can be imagined. If one should happen to be a house-holder, which was considered the highest order, prescribed for a Brahmin, it is expected of him that he should be firm in faith in God, read in the scriptures and the sacred writings of his ancients, well established in the virtues of patience, endurance, discipline, control of mind and body, humanity, love and charity. With a little modification the same terms may be applied to him who has come under the influence of the Theistic movement and whose conscience has been awakened. Unflinching faith in the goodness of the All-loving God, amidst the vicissitudes of fortune anxiety to raise the general level of intelligence and of faith among his less favoured brethren amidst whom his lot may be cast, ungrudging work without regard to self and without expectation of any

remuneration or reward, except the approbation of his own conscience, and of his God, and an entire dependence upon the grace of God for encouragement and strength in the task which he has undertaken will be the distinguishing feature of such an individual. The scene of labour will be the town or village which he inhabits and it is a pernicious theory that teaches man to fly away from his surroundings and to give up the world in the hope of finding thereby freedom from the turmoils of life. It is the mind of man that, in the poet's language, makes a heaven or hell for itself, and all the fasts, prayers, rites, ceremonies, and pilgrimages will not avail one if the mind is not purified. Such things are vanities and vanities of vanities. With the conscience awakened and the heart made strong by the free inflow of the Divine impulse from above, the rest of the work becomes easy. Just as in a clock-work everything more or less depends upon the soundness of the main spring, so the conscience or the combination of the good qualities which constitute "Character," has to be kept up in a sound condition before the general tone of the work in which one engages oneself is raised. This soundness can be only attained by the opening of the inner springs to the Divine influences, and the Theistic movement concerns itself primarily with the adjusting of the inner springs of life.

These are the stock and the equipment

with which the Theistic movement or as more generally known the the Brahmo Samaj starts in its work of re-generating the country. The advocates of the other reforming religious movements claim a similar privilege for their methods ; I am not here either to criticise their teachings or belittle their efforts, but my main object is to state that however much reforming zeal there may be, yet be it an individual or movement, unless he or it stands the examination of the ideals mentioned above it is not worth the name. The characteristics spoken of are universal and are found to be imbedded in all the religions of the world. Mahammaadism, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism which are the four principal religions contain in them in a more or less developed form all the principles which I have enumerated above, nay it is in man's own nature but only in a crude or undeveloped form. It is an idle controversy to set forth the superiority of one religion over another, and to try to find out laws which are not to be found in others and to compare the claims of Mahomet, Christ or Buddha to the recognition of the world. Every one of the great prophets and saints has been great or small in proportion to his own self-realisation, and the book of Nature has been always sacred to them who came to read their lessons in it. With

these universal principles for acceptance the Theistic movement has begun to work and the work has been going on for nearly a century. It now remains to see whether the work has been satisfactory, whether the light that first dawned in the East at your place has spread to other parts of India and at what stage we have arrived.

In the first place, it has to be observed that the Indian soil is congenial to the rise of a new cult and in India more than in any other place are to be found systems of philosophy and religion, which are at once the wonder and ridicule of the world. Neither the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, nor any other ancient civilized race, cultivated the science of Metaphysics as it was done in India. and at the same time no Nation suffers more from the abuses and excesses to which the logical conclusions were carried. Liberty of thought, though not of action, was allowed in all its profuseness and the result was, that from rank atheism and a direct denial of the Godhead to the absolute identity of the whole Universe in one Immaculate Being, systems of thought of varying gradations, are to be found in the writings of the philosophers, and coupled with that, are also to be found practices which are in entire variance with the principles taught. How the highest thought can be found in conjunction with base and grovelling practices is a problem

for the historian to solve. This much, however, is certain, that we find that in the daily lives of most of us, religion is absolutely divorced from conduct and modern education in spite of all that can be said in its favour has still more widened the gulf. It was truly said, that most of the educated people lead a double life. With the majority, the earth turns round the sun at school whereas it is otherwise at home. There are intellectual convictions which are sometimes very strong, but there is also a lack of nerve to follow them in practice. Homage paid by vice to virtue is deemed hypocrisy but I do not find an apt expression, for the tribute rendered by intelligence to surrounding ignorance. The fact is that the conservatism which is necessary to preserve and conserve whatever is good has encroached upon the ground where it should not have a place and is ingrained in our very constitution and has become a part of our flesh and blood. Given this conservative nature as a postulate and the inherited pessimistic tendency which looks upon life as a burden and misery, and everything done to improve it is so much labour wasted, the reason why the work of the Theistic movement has been slow and imperceptible becomes obvious. The artificial barriers created by caste, and the air-tight compartments into which each class is divided and further subdivided with sympathies dwarfed and

views narrowed sufficiently account for the slow progress of the Theistic movement. The conditions in India are peculiar and are such as are not to be found elsewhere. The customs of each province, nay, of each district, are so very different and opposed to those in others, that it becomes very difficult to properly understand each other. The tendency is such that the reforming religion becomes in course of time a sect by itself, and I have often heard people say that by insisting upon the religion of the Brahmo Samaj which claims to be non-sectarian, we shall be adding one more sect and one more creed to the already existing innumerable sects and creeds of the country. I shall not be divulging any secret if I were to tell you that any movement in my place, be it social or religious, if it be led by one who belongs to a particular caste, others of different castes will not join it, though they are at one in heart with all its principles and though they may in actual practice even carry them out. The factious spirit is very strong, and the consequence is, we are so divided among ourselves that no common agreement seems sufficient enough to make us forget our differences, and bring us together. It is amidst such a people, of whom we ourselves form a part, that the work of the Theistic Church has to be done, and the work seems well nigh stupendous. The most difficult

part of the work consists in convincing people that before God all are equal, and the barriers of caste are artificial and not heaven-ordained but man-made. Any other movement which accentuates these barriers and upholds them, finds a large number of adherents and in the Madras Presidency, to which I have the honor to belong, Theistic Churches are not so many as could be expected, but are scattered few and far between, and their work is confined to very small centres with very limited activities.

Then the question arises whether the work is to be given up as a wild-goose chase, and we are to be content with the policy of let alone, waiting for better times. The time-spirit, however, seems to be against any such view, and favourable to the workers in the cause. The walls of superstition and prejudice appear to have been the result of isolation and exclusiveness. The vast distances and the difficulties of travelling and thus understanding the people of one place by another, their habits and manners, have partly to account for this state of things. With the introduction of Railways, the shortening of distances, and the more frequent intercourse among the people of different countries, and the introduction of all the arts of civilised life, such as the Postal and Telegraph departments combined with the circumstance that

all the people of India are brought under *Pax Britanica*, and are governed by one system of laws and constitution, and that a common language has been found for India in that of the rulers, which has made correspondence easy, these walls are slowly giving way, and the inroads of the Theistic Church into the domain of caste are made easier. Customs and practices of one place can be easily compared with those prevailing in another, and nothing so much appeals to the imagination as one's own experience. By comparison what was hitherto thought to have foundation in the nature of things is no longer considered as such, but only as a thing devised for the sake of convenience. In proof of this I have only to point out that one living in the cities is found to be less bigoted and more liberal in his views and practices than one living in a far-off village away from the centre of civilisation, the difference being that the prejudices have slowly melted away and disappeared altogether by contact and comparison of the habits of neighbours for which there was no opportunity in the other case.

The next favourable circumstance for the growth and expansion of the Theistic movement is the fact that the spiritual ideals which it holds aloft are coming to be recognised as essential and true by liberal movements in all lands. Increasing attention is being paid of late to this aspect

of the question among all the Western Nations, and it is more and more felt notwithstanding the pride of race and colour, that we are all one at the core, and if equal opportunities be afforded to all, each unit of a nation or race will be found to contain within itself germs of development and steady growth. Toleration towards the other races and peace and harmony were the keynote of the many organisations which were held in America, Germany and England, viz : the Chicago Parliament of Religions, the World's Race Congress held in London, and the Berlin Congress of Religions held last year. In our own country movements were organised last year and this year too, in Calcutta and Allahabad wherein each religious system was expounded in a broad and catholic spirit, and mutual respect and esteem paid to the adherents of the other systems. It would not have been possible to witness such things formerly except during the short period in our history when the Moghul Emperor Akbar reigned. These are all signs of the times which are extremely favourable to the expansion of the Theistic Church, and if one has imagination enough to look upon these things and interpret their indication, one need not lose courage, but on the other hand, there is every reason to get fortified in the reflection that it is not all wrong with the world as he at one time supposed, but that there is an Arbiter of destinies

whose ways are inscrutable and who directs us all to the right in the end.

It will then be found that the Theistic Church has only to be properly organised and the centres of activity multiplied. It is workers in the cause that are needed, and with more enthusiasm and zeal in the propagation and spread of the Faith it is sure to leaven the whole mass. The times are particularly propitious and the success of the other movements as the political, social, educational and the industrial, depends upon the growth and expansion of the Theistic Church. They are but a reflection of the main important movement and when the heart is sound and healthy the whole machinery of the organs in the body need not fear of disease and decay. The heart blood has to run freely to all the parts of the body, and so long as the flow of blood is pure and copious, every part of the body will be healthy and vigorous and full of gushing life. As in essence, all the other movements are the reflex of the Theistic movement, they have to co-operate and work simultaneously. What is after all the aspiration of either the social reformers or the political reformers but that the sense of justice should not be allowed to suffer any shock by the pride of racial superiority, or the superiority of one sex over the other, that equal opportunities should be given to all to cultivate their own institutions, that there should be freedom

and emancipation from bondage of artificial rules, and that thought and action should be allowed to grow and expand without let or hindrance, but without at the same time degenerating itself into license. How can these things be, except under the proper controlling agency of well-directed influence of religion ? It is therefore of primary importance that an earnest endeavour has to be made in the spread of the teachings of the Brahmo Samaj, and in proportion as we put forth our efforts we shall be entitled to the gratitude of the coming generations.

The annual Theistic Conference is held for the purpose of deliberating as to how we should direct our operations, and I am glad to note in this connection that one lakh of rupees has been given by an estimable gentleman of Bombay for the Brahmo Missionaries of the Sadharan Samaj to work in the Prarthana Samaj there. Though we are concerned with religious work, yet capital is also sometimes needed, and I have to remember with gratitude that for the extension of our little Mandir at Mangalore we received substantial help from our friends in Bombay. It is Bengal, however, that supplies the initiative in all the great undertakings, and it is from the North that we take the waters of the Ganges and quench the thirst of the aspiring soul. It is Bengal that supplied almost all the great men in the last

century as well as in the present, and it is here that the stream of religious life flows deep and clear. The names of the great leaders of the movement, like Rajah Rammohun Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen, Protapchunder Mozoomdar, Ananda Mohun Bose, Pandit Sivanath Sastri and a host of others whom I need not name and who are still with us, are names to conjure with, and to electrify all our latent energies. They did yeoman's service to the cause in their time and we owe a deep debt of obligation to them all. Their memories are still kept green by us and we cherish them dearly and we fondly hope that the movement if properly worked, will produce yet greater men to inspire and guide the path of the less enlightened brethren. When we entertain such great hopes for the future of our Church, it is but proper that we should not do anything to sully its name. It is here that we often turn our eyes, and I have therefore one word to say to you with reference to a subject which I would rather have left unsaid. It is that the Brahmo Samaj being such a grand organisation, and destined to become a World-Religion in future by the grace of God, should not be allowed to be divided against itself by schism of any sort. There is the danger of our being also sunk in ignorance like the rest, and while we call upon the rest to

make up their differences and unite together, it is not proper that we should afford examples in our own lives, of separation and distrust in each other. The cause that we embrace is too sacred to permit of making much of our own private differences and exalt them to the rank of differences in principle ; for in religion as in other things "united we stand, and divided we fall."

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your kind patience in hearing me on the several subjects which I have discussed at some length and on which I felt rather strongly and permit me once more to thank you for the honour you have done to my humble self, by asking me to preside at this celebration.

Peace,

Peace,

Peace.



The proceedings of the evening ended with the election of the Subjects Committee.

On the next day the Conference met again at 7-30 A. M. when Mr. N. G. Wellinker, Principal, Dyal Singh College, Lahore conducted divine service, after which Babu Lalit Mohan Das, M. A. of Calcutta read the following paper :—

PROPAGATION OF BRAHMOISM IN BENGAL.

(BY BABU LALITMOHAN DAS, M.A.)

Brahmoism is the religion of the age. The world is slowly but surely moving towards it. In modern times a new spirit has dawned upon the earth; the world has felt its impact. A wave of liberalism has been passing all over the world, on the one hand undermining the time-honored institutions of social and moral bondage and rank superstitions and prejudices to which millions of people were unconsciously victims and on the other hand broadening the spiritual vision, infusing new ideals into the hearts of those who were so long blind to the true destiny of man. Ours is the age of liberty of thought and action in all spheres of life and of catholicity of spirit. Great changes have been brought about in recent years, in politics, social polity, in science and literature. Modern science and modern philosophy have been paving the way to liberalism in various domains of our thoughts and activities. Religions of the world, in spite of their different forms and practices not altogether divested of blind prejudices, sectarian narrowness and bigotry that often give rise to religious feuds, have been, all over the world, tending towards one goal—universal theism. The theistic movement—the direct and spiritual

worship of the One True God—has been gaining ground day by day all over the world. Yet there is a strong necessity and urgency on the part of those who advocate theistic principles, for making strenuous efforts to propagate its principles to the yet uninitiated. The idea of One God and the necessity of His spiritual worship is not new in India or in any other country. But in past ages theistic principles were intermixed with gross forms of idolatry and even the staunchest votaries of theism were not unoften seen to support and take part publicly in idolatrous practices.

The theism which shall be in consonance with the spirit of the modern age, must not only be a philosophical creed confined to the enlightened few but it must be a life-giving religion of the heart, moulding and sanctifying the thoughts, feelings and activities of the people at large. Our entire activities, social or domestic, private or public, must be regulated according to theistic principles and our life and character based on theistic ideals. The religion of the Brahmo Samaj has certain principal characteristics, which are as follows :— (1) spirituality, (2) liberty, (3) universality and catholicity, (4) morality, (5) sociability, and (6) all-comprehensiveness. In propagating the principles of Brahmoism, we must not lose sight of these characteristics of our religion ; we must bear in mind that ours is a universal religion embracing

humanity at large and that to worship the One True God in spirit and truth and to do His will, to realise God in all concerns of life, is the goal of human life and the supreme privilege of every man.

Though the whole world is irresistibly moving towards this universal theism and no reactionary forces will ever be able to retard its progress, yet we who have tasted its sweet fruits, owe it to ourselves, to God and to man, to see that the light of true religion be kindled in every heart illumining the dark paths of ignorance and superstition. Brahmoism has had its birth in Bengal. The number of Brahmos and Brahmo Samājes is far greater here than in any other part of the country. Here the missionary activities have been more vigorous than in any other Province. Yet I must confess with regret that our attempts to preach the gospel of Brahmoism have been very feeble and our achievements small, considering the vast field of work lying before us. In many places Samājes exist, but their existence is almost nominal, since they are attended only by a few men who have no other public function in connection with the Samaj than to hold regular or irregular service once a week. Our missionaries are few in number and most of them are, at present, enfeebled by age or disease. Gloomy as the picture is from this point of view, I still believe in the providence of God and in the ultimate triumph of

truth. Brahmoism shall triumph. God, in His mercy, will infuse new spirit into the minds of His servants, or raise up a new band of workers devoted to His cause, who will hold out the banner of love and truth before the millions of this vast continent. The force of theistic principles is irresistible. They must find their way to every hearth and home and those who will be harbingers of this divine light, will be thrice blessed. But at present we must make the best of what we have and try to utilise the resources at our disposal, leaving the consequences in the hands of Him who is the dispenser of all good things.

(1) We have three sections of the Brahmo Samaj here in Calcutta. But in the Mofussil most of the Samajes have been practically maintaining neutrality, in as much as they offer their pulpits to the missionaries and ministers of all the sections of the Samaj, though these Samajes and members belonging to them, have special leanings towards this or that section. The number of missionaries, and mission workers in these three sections, though inadequate, is not altogether small. If they agree to work together on broad liberal principles, eliminating the non-essentials from the essentials of religion and standing on fundamental doctrines of Brahmoism, I think, they can yet effectively carry the gospel of our faith far and near, not only in Bengal but in the whole of India.

(2) In Calcutta, Dacca, Barisal, Bankipur and Cherrapoonjee only we have permanent seats of missionaries. In all other places, the work of the Samaj is carried on by lay-men of the locality; missionaries visit these places only occasionally. This state of things is not at all satisfactory. Occasional missionary visits, of course, help to infuse new spirit and enthusiasm into the minds of the local Brahmos and to stir up the dormant religious sentiments of the public. But in order that the work may be effective and lasting, a whole-time missionary should be located at each important centre, if not at each Samaj. At present it is absolutely necessary that the whole of Bengal including Behar, Orissa, Chotanagpur and Assam should be divided into a few mission units and for each unit, a missionay or mission-worker should be placed at a central place, from which he may pay visits to, and guide the operations of, the Samajes within his jurisdiction, strengthen the local Brahmos and try to propagate our principles in places where there are no Brahmo Samajes. For the present, besides the places where there are already missionaries, the following places may be recommended as mission centres in Bengal :—Gauhati, Jalpaiguri, Comilla, Burdwan, Midnapur, Bhagalpur, Ranchi, Cuttack, Krishnagar, Faridpur, Pabna, Tangail and Khulna.

(3) New missionaries are absolutely necessary.

We want men and money. These two factors of successful mission operations are interdependent ; if we get men of energy and piety to undertake mission work, money will be forthcoming ; on the other hand, if money is forthcoming, workers will not be wanting. It is to be regretted that there is a want of missionary zeal among us, now a days. The spirit of self-sacrifice for the cause of religion, for the purpose of uplifting humanity to a higher ideal of morality and religion, is at a discount at least among the members of the Brahmo Samajes in Bengal. There ought to be a number of religiously disposed men of education and character coming forward to undertake the mission work. They should be ready to sacrifice all, suffer all, if need be for God and man, for the propagation of the saving truth of Brahmoism. On the other hand the members of the Brahmo Samaj ought to contribute liberally to the mission fund so that the new light of the spiritual religion of the Brahmo Samaj may be carried to every town and village. We shall be wanting in our loyalty to God and to the church to which we have the honour to belong, if we fail to open our purse for carrying on its work. We should remember if the saving religion of the Brahmo Samaj has brought peace and consolation to our troubled souls, we have no right to deny the same benefits to other struggling spirits thirsting after true religion. No work has ever been

done without willing sacrifice on the part of those who are interested in it. Our love for God and the church will be tested by the amount of sacrifice which we are ready to make for its cause. I hope and trust, men and money will be forthcoming for the carrying on of the sacred work of the Brahmo Samaj.

(4) The Brahmo Samaj has never had an adequate number of missionaries. The mission work of the Samaj has, since its foundation, been, to a very great extent, carried on by the lay-members having missionary zeal. The Brahmo Samaj has effaced the false line of demarcation that is often arbitrarily drawn between the clergy and the laity. The Brahmo Samaj recognises no such unnecessary distinction except in so far that the ordained missionaries can devote more time and energy to mission work than the latter. Most of the Brahmo Samajes in all parts of India, owe their origin and existence to the missionary zeal and self-sacrificing spirit of the lay members of the society. Much of the preaching work has always been done by laymen. But it is to be regretted that the missionary zeal of the lay members of the church has now a days greatly abated. The number of Brahmos is on the increase. There are men of light and leading holding high rank and social position in different parts of the county. Some of them even now do as much as lies in their power for the

furtherance of our cause. But most of them are indifferent. The missionary zeal which was evinced by the late Babus Chandicharan Sen,³ Jagadiswar Gupta, Padmahas Goswami, Umeshchandra Dutt, Prakas Chandra Ray, and many others, some of whom are still living, commands universal admiration. They, amidst their multifarious public and private duties, found time to propagate the principles of Brahmoism far and near in every possible way. It is only fitting that the lay members of our Samaj in town or Mofussil, should imitate their bright examples and try to propagate the principles of our faith wherever they happen to live. They may help to strengthen the local Samajes or establish new Samajes where there is none ; they may deliver lectures, organise philanthropic works and lead preaching parties to the Mofussil whenever practicable.

(5) Our cause may be greatly furthered by the establishment of educational Institutions under Brahmo management at different centres. Through education Brahmo ideals may be instilled into the minds of the rising generation and the Brahmo teachers may greatly help in moulding the life and character of young men according to our ideal. On the other hand, Brahmo teachers supported by the schools and colleges, may work for the local Brahmo Samajes in various ways without burdening the Samajes with their expenses. Even now we

have a considerable number of professors and teachers in colleges and schools in different parts of the country. Some of them have been doing yeoman's service to our cause. But others are not so active. They should rouse up their dormant spirit and help the struggling Samajes to carry on their work vigorously. Every Brahmo is a missionary, so goes the saying. Every Brahmo is responsible to God and man for the furtherance of the cause of the theistic movement ; every Brahmo, no matter whatever his rank or position may be, should come forward to help the cause of the Brahmo Samaj.

(6) Without deviating from the high ideal of our universal religion, without identifying the religion of our church with Hinduism or any other historical religion we may take the help of the different scriptures of the world in preaching our gospel to different sections of the Indian people. We should accept the essentials of all religions which are substantially the same and reject the non-essentials that are erroneously regarded by millions of the votaries of the respective religions as indispensable articles of faith. The great Raja Rammohun Roy showed the way. He tried to convince, and that with marvellous success, the people of different religious persuasions of the truth of the principles he preached, by quoting texts from their own scriptures. One of our

workers has been doing excellent mission work among the Hindus by reading and explaining to them texts from Hindu scriptures according to the theistic ideal. Others may follow his example. Some may read and explain the texts from Al-koran to our Mahommedan friends, among whom we may expect to find many a sympathetic listener. But in this respect our preachers should be very careful. There is a tendency in certain quarters to represent our universal faith as a sectional religion. This tendency should be discouraged. But for the strenuous efforts and sacrificing zeal of St. Paul^o who carried the light of Christianity beyond the bounds of Judaic influence, the religion of love as preached by Christ Jesus would have remained a sectarian religion confined to a few persons of Jewish origin. St. Peter did not like this universalising movement ; but history tells us, who has rendered greater service to Christianity. In reading and explaining the texts from different scriptures, let us not forget for a single moment, that ours is a church universal, under whose banner all races of mankind will stand as brothers, hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder. All scriptures of the world are sacred to us, all prophets of the world are our teachers. We must sit at the feet of all and take inspiration from them all, but we shall throw our lots with none of them. God is the only unmistakeable guide. In all our efforts the

universality of our religion should be scrupulously upheld.

(7) At present the practice is, that our missionaries visit only the places where there are Brahmo Samajes or some individual Brahmos. Very little attempt is made to spread the gospel of our Church to villages and even to towns where there are no Samajes. This is chiefly due to the dearth of missionaries and mission workers among us and also, to a certain extent, to the want of apostolic fervour among them, that characterised the first band of workers under the leadership of Brahmananda Keshubchunder Sen. But if our lay members agree to work at their leisure time, during the vacation and if those who have retired from the service, take to the mission work, and if we are inspired with a little more missionary zeal, we shall be in a position to send preaching excursions even to villages and have new Samajes established at various centres.

(8) Instead of sending a single mission worker to a new place, it is more profitable to send a party consisting of persons who are able to sing, to preach and to conduct service. *Sankirtan* should form a principal part of the preaching excursion. This experiment was tried by late Babu Keshubchunder Sen and proved a great success. The same place should be repeatedly visited and a Samaj should be established if practicable.

(9) Several Samajes have been extinct now, having no one to look after their affairs. There are Prayer-Halls but there is none to conduct divine service ; attempts should be made to revive these Samajes by enlisting the sympathy of men belonging to the localities.

(10) We have hitherto done very little towards carrying the gospel of truth to the masses, towards ameliorating their condition and uplifting the depressed classes. In Bengal we have our mission in the Khasi hills and the single-handed labours of our missionary, Babu Nilmani Chakravarti have been bearing fruits. Our friends of the Dacca Branch of the Sadhanasram have opened a Depressed Classes Mission in the interior of the Dacca District and the work is being carried on with zeal. At Barahnagore the life-long labours of Babu Sasipada Banerjea have attained a considerable success and the working men of the locality have been drawn towards the Brahmo Samaj. But these successes are mere dew drops in the vast ocean of work that lies before us in this direction. It will not do to confine our activities to the educated few. Brahmoism must not be the religion only of the upper ten thousands but it must filtrate through the lower strata of society. But in order that the masses may be drawn to our faith, it is absolutely necessary that schools should be established among them. They must be reached

through educational and philanthropic work. The Brahmo Samaj should have sympathy with the Depressed Classess Missions all over the land and have separate missions of their own. To uplift the masses, to carry the torch of education and enlightenment among them, to give them a higher ideal of life, should form one of the most important functions of the Brahmo Samaj. It is then and then only that we will succeed in persuading them to accept our faith.

(11) In days past, the Brahmo Samaj was connected with all philanthropic and other movements calculated to be productive of good to the country. Brahmos were, in a sense, pioneers in all progressive movements ; unless we undertake works of public utility, we cannot expect that the people will feel the force of our religion. We should be self-sacrificing, and ready to help those who are in need of help, before we ask them to accept our religion,

(12) We should publish books and tracts explaining the principles of our religion and sell them at cheap rates. Free distribution of books does little good. We have men of light and leading among us ; we have men of piety who have attained considerable religious experiences. They should be asked to write books for the Samaj and arrangements should be made to sell them at different centres of activity. Our missionaries and lay

workers should make it a point to carry Brahmo books with them and persuade the people to purchase them. Young men should volunteer to carry books from house to house in Calcutta and Mofussil and help the Samaj in giving its message to the people. Our papers also help the preaching work ; attempts should be made to improve the papers and to have their circulation as large as possible.

(13) General literature may form a medium for propagating our liberal principles. We have several authors and journalists among us. In writing books and articles they should consider it their bounden duty to inculcate the high liberal principles of the Brahmo Samaj into the minds of their readers through their writings. Our leading men are often invited to deliver speeches or take part in meetings not connected with the Brahmo Samaj. They may often utilise these opportunities to set before the public our high ideals as far as practicable, consistently with the functions they are asked to perform. There they have grave responsibilities and to forget those responsibilities will be injurious to the cause of the Samaj.

(14) Above all, our life and character should be such as may command respect of the public. We must live purely a Brahmo life. Our missionaries and workers should mix with the people, sympathise with them, feel for their distress and

help them not only in their spiritual struggles but also in their struggles for bread. They should see men of all denominations wherever they go and try to enlist their sympathy.

Times are now favourable for the propagation of our faith. The recent political agitation has opened the eyes of our people to the serious problems of the day. The question of unifying the various races of India, professing different religions, speaking different languages and having different social customs and usages, has been troubling our public men. And the thoughtful among them have begun to feel that the principles which the Brahmo Samaj hold and preach, can help effectively to solve the national problems of the day. The people are eager to hear our message ; but we have been failing in discharging the duties God has entrusted to us. Let us have faith in His mercy and make strenuous efforts for propagating our faith. Let us forget our petty differences and make one great effort in carrying the light of our faith to every town and village, to every hearth and home. Whole hearted devotion to the cause is the one thing needful. "In things essential unity, in things non-essential liberty and in all things charity," let this be our motto. Inspired by true faith in the living God, let us come forward to do whatever we can in furtherance of our cause and contribute liberally to the mission fund. "Love

and service," let that be our life's work. Love of God and service of man, is the one end of our life and let us be ever ready to make sacrifices for the attainment of that end.

Mr. D. V. Prakash Rao, B.A. of Cocanada a veteran worker of the Theistic movement in the Northern Circars next read the following paper embodying practical suggestions for the furtherance of the Theistic movement in the east coast of Madras Presidency :—

Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you in compliance with the request of my Brother, Mr. Hem Chandra Sarkar, who wrote to me a few days ago to come prepared with a short paper containing practical suggestions for the furtherance of Theistic movement on the east coast of the Madras Presidency. The Theistic movement took its root in our Presidency, from the date on which Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen first set his foot at Calicut in 1864. Fourteen years after, a regularly organized Prarthana Samaj was established at Rajahmundry, which claims the honour of being the first town in the Mufassil to worship God in spirit and in congregation. Rao Bahadur Mr. K. Viresalingam Pantulu, whose name and fame, as a theist and social reformer, have been long known to Bengal, was the President-founder, of the Rajahmundry Brahmo Samaj, and the cluster of Samajes now scattered all over the districts, north of Madras, may be said to owe their origin to his influence direct or indirect. In

his interesting "LETTERS FROM THE FIELD", written during the course of his tours in our districts from 1904 onwards, Mr. Hem Chandra Sarkar has been occasionally enlightening the Brahmo public on the condition of the Samajes in the different stations which he visited, and the circumstances which are contributing to their development or deterioration.

The Samajes in the east coast districts which can be found at Berhampore, Parlakimidi, Vizianagram, Pittapur, Peddapur, Cocanada, Rajahmundry, Narsapur, Ellore, Bezwada, Masulipatam, Guntur, Narsaraupeta, Tenali, Bapatla Epuripalem and Nellore, were at first mostly congregations consisting of a floating population of members. The importance and stability of the Samaj at each station except Rajahmundry and Masulipatam, depended upon the amount of influence exercised by one or two of its intelligent members and the Samaj used to be in a state of suspended animation when such member or members had left the station. Unfortunately, the Southern India Brahmo Samaj at Madras has not been able to exercise the influence which a premier Samaj at a Presidency town is expected to do. Thus every Samaj was a separate unit and there was neither cohesion nor concerted action, nor was any Samaj affiliated to the parent Samaj at Madras or Calcutta.

The missionary visits to our districts of Pandit Sivanath Sastri, Messrs. Bipin Chandra Pal, Hem Chandra Sarkar, V. R. Shinde Amrita Lal Bose, M. N. Bose and H. C. Maitra and others coupled with the spread of theistic literature and theistic journals of India and

England, and the periodicals, though of shorter life, started by us have popularized the cause of theism to a perceptible extent.

From the beginning, our Samajes which are fundamentally concerned with the spiritual interests of their members, have not forgotten their duty to society in other directions. However imperfect, crude and fleeting their activities might appear to an onlooker, the Samajes have not ignored the social aspect of their propaganda. Hence religious reform and social reform have gone hand in hand wherever there has been a Brahmo Samaj, or a Prarthana Samaj, with the result that, to the regret of many of those who do not belong to these Samajes separate social reform associations have ceased to exist. As our critics make it a point to revile at Brahmoism and misrepresent it as Christianity in disguise, active social reformers or sympathizers with social reform involving expulsion from caste are rarely to be found outside the pale of the Brahmo Samaj. For the dislike which they entertain towards the Brahmo Samaj even sympathisers of social reform have been indifferent not only to the social side of the Samaj work, but are swelling the ranks of the opponents. In proof of this observation, it may be mentioned that even in Cocanada, which is one of the centres of theistic activities, three nautch parties were allowed to sing and dance in the Coronation Durbar procession on the 12th night, the organizers choosing or deliberately conniving at that method of wounding the feelings of the Brahmo members of the Executive Committee for the Durbar Day

Celebrations, who are well known for their anti-nautch propaganda.

The agencies required for the successful propagation of theism are in my opinion (1) well conducted Newspapers (2) Cheap Theistic Literature in Telugu (3) Able Missionaries (4) Well-conducted Educational Institutions like Young Men's Brahmo Associations and (5) Periodic conferences.

Taking the above items in order :—

(1) NEWS PAPERS.

Within my knowledge ten periodicals were started in the Telugu country to help the cause of Theism and they were discontinued after a long or brief career, either for lack of organized and sustained work, or owing to dissensions among the workers themselves. A well-conducted Theistic journal never lacked public support, in the face of opposition, which in many places is represented by persons who, for the sake of self-advancement scruple not to misrepresent even the Brahmo Samaj as a seditious movement, while professing friendship and sympathy with it and acting in union with the Brahmo leaders of the station in other spheres of activity ; the position of an Editor of a Brahmo organ in the Mufassil would be very delicate. There is, therefore, no prospect of a well-conducted Brahmo organ in Telugu being ushered into existence in our districts in the near future. Until the clouds of suspicion against the Brahmo Samaj are dissipated in our parts and the Police cease to watch the movements of the Brahmo workers, I would suggest that *The Indian Messenger* and other Theistic journals

be supplied to *bona fide* students, public associations, and to clerks and teachers on Rs. 30 and below for half rates in order to render them more popular and accessible to a wider circle of readers.

The cry everywhere is for cheap Theistic literature in vernacular. The English Works of Rammohun Roy, Keshub Chunder Sen, Pratap Chandra Mozoodar, Pandit Sivanath Sastri, Tattvabhushan, Sarkar and Ranade have been of immense service to us and are eagerly sought after by many. The study of such books will surely dispel the prejudice against Brahmoism. As an inducement to read and understand those treasure-houses of knowledge, the system of presenting copies of those somewhat costly books by gentlemen who can afford to do so, to the successful young men in the University Examinations may be adopted as is done with the Holy Bible by Christian Mission Societies. We pass resolutions in our Conferences entrusting the duty of writing books on theistic and allied subjects to members who for several reasons, are unable or unfit to perform the task. Want of leisure, want of libraries containing books of reference and want of previous study of the subjects are hindrances in the way of members who are otherwise anxious to discharge their duty. Members who have studied the subjects thoroughly and who can well expound them in English should undertake to write brief chapters in English and get them rendered into our Vernacular. This is how the voluminous but cheap Christian Vernacular Literature is being produced year after year and distributed

broadcast. The Missionary Editor of *The Ravi*, a weekly Telugu newspaper with wide circulation, published by the Canadian Baptist Mission Society in our Town, resorts to this method whenever he wants to express his own views on important political and other topics. We should have recourse to the same methods to create a Theistic Vernacular Literature in our districts.

The occasional visits to our districts of Brahmo Missionaries have created a great deal of interest in the public mind to know what the gospel of Brahmoism is. In these days of study of comparative theology and wide culture, the audience are often better informed about religious topics than the preachers from the pulpit or the lecturers on the platform. Hence preachers of average capacity cannot command in towns a good hearing and our Samajes are too poor to secure the services of a costly missionary possessing necessary training and culture. Even such a man should have the tact to reconcile, the past with the present and ability to interpret the west to the east. He should develop in himself the national ways of preaching and living, instead of harping on the foreign system in which he might have been trained with a purpose. Under the care of ill-equipped preachers, any Samaj will suffer instead of progressing. Brahmoism can be rendered popular and attractive to some extent, if a few Brahmo families of Bengal be prevailed upon to settle amidst us, so that our people may know and realize what the ideals of a real Brahmo family are. In this period of

religious transition, there should be practical example of a model family like that of the late Mr. Chandicharan Sen at Waltair before us to mould the lives of members or families in our country.

There is the flourishing Veresalingam High School at Rajahmundry, whose spacious buildings were opened a month ago by Principal H. C. Maitra. It can be said to be an exclusively Brahmo Institution, as regular theistic religious instruction is arranged to be imparted to its students. The Pittapur Rajah's College, Cocanada, though not a Brahmo Institution is presided over by a Brahmo, and counts among its teaching staff a good number of Associate members of the local Brahmo Samaj. The Pittapur Rajah's Orphanage at Cocanada is an out-and-out Brahmo institution. It is refreshing to add that in the Colleges and Schools from Berhampore to Madras, one often comes across teachers who have been slowly but steadily inculcating the principles of Brahmoism to their pupils and preparing their minds for their reception, when those students repair to join the institutions in towns. It would be advisable for influential members of the various Samajes, to encourage their young men of parts with inclinations towards Brahmoism, to enter the educational line since they, as teachers of young boys, will have exceptional facilities to sow the seeds of theism and prepare year after year an increasing number of sympathetic hearts.

The Hindu and Mohammedan Girls' Schools established by Government in our districts are of the Elementary Grade and very few of them have got the full

complement of women teachers, in spite of State Scholarships to widows. In consequence, grown-up girls are not being allowed to remain in school long enough to complete even the elementary course of studies. If women teachers be secured to the existing elementary schools, there is every prospect of grown up girls being allowed to attend them in large numbers. A Central Secondary School for girls equipped on the lines of the Brahmo Boarding School at Calcutta, will then be a necessity. The Madras Government, having lately sanctioned the establishment at Rajahmundry of a Training School for women teachers to serve the coast districts, Rajahmundry will be a suitable centre for the location of the contemplated Central Secondary School for Indian women. Rao Bahadur Mr. Verasalingam Pantulu has already acquired an extensive plot of ground at a distance from the busy portion of the town, in which a Widows Home and a Rescue Home have been already built. There is ample space left in it for the construction of any number of additional buildings required for kindred purposes. The Versalingam High School at Rajahmundry and the Pittapur Rajah's College Cocanada, admit Panchamas into their classes without the necessity of their resorting to Christian schools, and the former admits girls into higher classes, without compelling them to go to European schools for girls. The Central Secondary School should be under the control of the local Hitakarini Samaj. which manages the Verasalingam High School above referred to.

Much good will result by starting and working in the

chief centres of Theistic activity, Young Men's Brahmo Associations after the model of Y.M.C.A.'s, Reading Rooms with Theistic journals, and Libraries filled with volumes on religious and philosophical subjects may be attached to the same. Lectures by leading theists may be arranged and classes for religious instructions opened therein. In this way, young men who are not necessarily members of Brahmo Samajes or Prayer Unions may be early induced to acquaint themselves with the Theistic life and thought and brought under its wholesome influence.

PERIODICAL GATHERINGS.

Conferences of friends and sympathisers of Theism are now being held at different centres, but lack of organised effort is rendering them fruitless. A Samaj which invites a conference to its station has to struggle hard to raise funds required for its expenses. Its difficulties can be imagined from the fact that it often cannot spare funds even to publish the resolutions passed at the conferences. As several Samajes find it hard to raise small monthly subscriptions for their recurring contingencies, it is necessary that a fund should be started levying small annual contributions from each Samaj to be devoted to the publication of reports of the conferences and tracts and leaflets on theistic subjects for distribution at the conferences. At present, the conferences are eventually resolving themselves into mere social gatherings with no lasting benefit to their organizers or the delegates who attend them.

On the 27th evening there was a very large gathering and after a short prayer by the President Mr. N. G. Wellinker, Principal, Dayal Singh College, Lahore read the following paper :—

THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM AND THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

DEAR FRIENDS,

That the Educational situation in India is at the present time more intricate than ever before, that it is fraught with issues of the deepest consequence for the future of the country, that it is engaging at this moment the anxious thought of the Government and the leaders of the people alike—all this is well and generally known. To us of the Brahmo Samaj, apart from the general interest which belongs to the subject by reason of its tremendous importance, the Educational Problem of our day has a very special interest as bearing most closely in some of its aspects on our work as a Reforming Religious body. It is these aspects of the problem which seem to me to intimately concern us that I propose to briefly bring under review in the present paper and regarding these I desire to lay before the Conference a few concrete suggestions for its consideration.

An intelligent observer of Indian Education in its broad aspects—even if he is not an Educationist—can not but be struck by two unmistakeable features which have marked the present day developments of Education in our country. These features related to each other almost as cause and consequence are first the

unprecedented interest which has been evinced by all the different communities among our people in the impartation of distinctively religious education and largely as the consequence of this practically universal feeling the establishment of a large number of, what may be termed, "denominational" Educational Institutions. Now taking these two features, I desire to attempt a short study of them, so as to bring out with clearness the thoughts I intend to present to my hearers. I ask first, whence comes this renewed and unquestionable interest in religious Education?" We will be told it is because the eyes of the elders have been opened to the dangers and risks of a purely secular education. They have seen, we will be told, how it breeds lawlessness, disloyalty, contempt for age and authority—every thing in a word that makes for social and political disintegration. Now as a teacher and educationist of long and varied experience I have been brought into the closest contact with a very large number of students at various ages and I have long felt an absorbing interest in studying their moral development; I have moreover brooded long and earnestly over this subject of the effect of a purely secular education on the character of the young. And I feel it only right to express as my conviction, that though a purely secular education has many drawbacks and will not produce to me of the types of character that I should much like to see flourishing amongst us, still that there is not the least ground to hold that it tends to engender or has as a matter of fact generally engendered the evils which are sometimes laid at its

door—such as those I have mentioned about. Very many the great and good men, whom we rightly honour as the patterns of civic and domestic virtues were brought up just under that secular system to which it is now-a-days the fashion to attribute some of the woeful lapses from good citizenship which in recent years have so sorely grieved us. Why is it then that the leaders of public opinion and Government, which in that matter must act with public opinion, so strongly demand religious education? I think that if we analyse the mind of the leaders carefully, we shall not fail to see that this new care for religious education springs from the feeling that in keeping the young ignorant of the religious scriptures of their race, we are depriving them of that which is best and highest in the heritage of their race. The Arya, the Jain, the Sanatan Hindu, the Mahommedan, the Christian in India has come to feel earnestly and deeply that it is impious and suicidal to allow his child to grow up without the knowledge of the faith which he knows is the one essential thing for making life happy and noble. And this to my mind accounts for the general enthusiasm for religious education which we are witnessing everywhere in India to-day.

Now we members of the Theistic Church, the Church Universal as I love to think of it, should rejoice in the emergence and growth of this feeling and heartily welcome the advent of religious education in our educational institutions. At the same time, it is our duty to watch its workings with anxious care and prevent its drifting into unprofitable channels. Religious education

in so far as it fosters faith in and love for a Spiritual Being as the Author and Ruler of the world and encourages the spirit of reverence of the religious scriptures which bring, as it were, tidings of things divine is beneficial in the highest degree ; but it may easily degenerate into the teaching of formulæ and ritual and thus create the spirit of bigotry, fanaticism and hatred for other faiths than one's own. When it becomes this it becomes an evil of the first order, and poisons the fair fruits of education. Now this is just the danger that confronts us to-day. The denominational colleges, of which there are now a great many, are teaching those things in their respective faith which do not promote the spirit of true piety, and of human Brotherhood, but rather minister to the pride of religion and the conceit that one's own faith is superior to another man's. This tendency is further accentuated by the fact that in the denominational colleges the students are all or most of one faith and have practically no opportunity of coming into contact with those of other faiths and thus correcting their prejudices and misconceptions regarding alien faiths. Our denominational colleges, thus, chiefly as the effect of a narrow and sectarian religious culture, are fostering a strong sectarian bias among their students and thus developing a type of thought and sentiment profoundly prejudicial to national unity and strength. Now here is just where the services of the Brahmo Samaj is needed : namely to teach our teachers and pupils by example and precept how to conserve that which is essential, permanent and valuable in religious education and at

the same time to keep out all that is merely formalistic, sectarian and calculated to encourage prejudice and bigotry.

But the practical question is "how are we to proceed to do this"? Denominational schools there will continue to be ; we cannot abolish them. The tendencies of the time are all in their favour and denominationalism in education must be expected in increasing measure as time goes on—at least for many years to come. We are actually on the eve of two great denominational universities. It is not the part of wisdom to decry the inevitable. Rather than dwell on the dangers and drawbacks of denominational institutions, let us seriously bethink ourselves what we can do as Church to minimise their sectarian tendencies. I hope it will not be thought that there is nothing that we can do. I believe that very useful service in this regard is not only open to us but demanded from us by the circumstances of the time in which we are living. Let me briefly indicate the lines on which we can render this service.

First, The denominational institutions are greatly in need of hand-books which will enable them to impart to their pupils in simple and attractive form the great things in their respective scriptures. If such hand-books were forthcoming, they would be largely used, by whichever body or society they were compiled. Now in our Church we have always insisted on the study of the best things in all the scriptures of the world. Would it be beyond our resources—intellectual and material—to compile manuals say on Vedantism, Bhakti,

Jainism, Islam, Sikhism &c for use in schools and colleges?

Secondly in the present epidemic of formalistic and ritualistic teaching, the moral elements in the religious life are being deplorably lost sight of. Always the letter killeth ; but the spirit is life-going. Amidst the wrangle of creeds and formulæ, the weighty things viz. righteousness, brotherly love for all men and above all *civic duty* are being sadly neglected. If we could arrange for lectures being delivered by teachers and professors of the Theistic faith to students in the different denominational colleges on morals as based on religion and particularly dealing with civic duty in its different branches, our lectures will be gladly accepted by these colleges, assuming of course that our lecturers are qualified for their work—and we will do much to bring home to the mind of our generation that morality is nine points of religion. Incidentally also our lecturers will be able to do much to break down sectarian prejudice and ill feeling.

Thirdly we can perform a service of the utmost importance by drawing up a careful and well graduated syllabus of religious instruction for schools and colleges with special reference to schools and colleges mainly or largely composed of Hindu students. I am particularly led to make this suggestion by the consideration of the needs of the college at Lahore under my charge, known as Dyal Sing College. Here we are required by the will of the donor to give religious instruction according to the teachings of the Brahmo samaj. Yet ours is not a denominational college,—indeed a Brahmo deno-

minational college is a practical impossibility—for the simple reason that the Brahmo community is too small numerically to provide sufficient numbers for a college even in Bengal, not to talk of other provinces. Well to come back to the college in Lahore, it is mainly composed of Hindus ; there is also a small fraction of Mahomedans. The Hindu students are young men, religiously inclined as a body, with a strong attachment to Hinduism and in the case of those belonging to the Arya Samaj with a passionate and fanatical attachment to the Vedas. Now how is Brahmo or Theistic instruction to be imparted in a college so constituted? To begin with, we are not a Theological College and any attempt to impart a systematic course of theological instruction however limited the course may be, is sure to be futile—because for one thing the exigencies of the preparation of students for the University leave only a very scanty margin of time for religious instruction, making such a course practically an impossibility. Then on what lines are we to put our teaching? If we introduce in the teaching any study of comparative religious beliefs, it simply bores and annoys the students who are interested in Hinduism, or Vedism or Islam but not in comparing their teachings. Similary if we give them extracts from the different scriptures it does not interest them, apart from the great difficulty of compiling suitable extracts of sufficient length and containing material suited to the Theistic instruction. If we speak of Hinduism alone, in however broad and catholic a spirit, the Mahomedans become apathetic if

not actually resentful ; besides the teacher is exposed to the imminent danger of running foul of the sensibilities of the Arya Samajists who are interested in nothing but the teaching of the divine origin and the infallibility of the Vedas. Suppose we give them the arguments for Theism as derived from Natural Religion, it strikes them as a superfluity, because they are nearly all of them believers in God ; if we teach them the main beliefs of our church, the process becomes principally intellectual and we awaken no emotion and make no use of the fine religious material that we have here, as we awaken no enthusiasm and little response in these men ; then again the difficulties and dangers of introducing devotional exercises in our religious classes are obvious. Such are our difficulties, and I believe that they are also the difficulties broadly speaking of other colleges where the personnel of the teaching staff is Brahmo, but the membership of the college is largely Hindu. Now I feel sure that to colleges in the position of our college at Lahore, it would be a great help if in consultation with our brothers who are engaged in education and have wider experience of religious education, we could get a definite course of religious instruction and could also arrive at some definite lines of religious work among our pupils.

Fourthly, the institution of a Brahmo Lecturership on the lines of the Haskell Lecturership would be a great step in advance in propagating our faith among the educated men of India. There are at least half a dozen men in our Church who are capable of ably and persuasively

presenting the essentials of the Theistic Faith and enforcing its claims in the light of up-to-date religious and philosophic thought. If one of such men devotes about two months every year in visiting the principal cities of India and presenting the message of Brahmoism to enlightened and thoughtful men, much benefit seems, to my mind, to be likely to result. I feel sure that the requisite financial means will be forthcoming if the matter is enthusiastically taken up and a proper appeal made to the friends of the cause.

Now in my humble judgment the first step towards the realisation of the objects I have outlined would be the formation of a Brahmo Educational League. The league should deal with all matters relating to religious education and training of youths both within and outside of schools. The league should, as opportunity appears, take up the matters I have enumerated above—the preparation of text books, the organisation of lectures and lectureships, the issuing of a manual of Theistic Instruction for schools and colleges and the devising of devotional exercises suitable for school and college classes and similar matters.

Our educational opportunity at present is exceptionally good and I pray to the Giver of all good gifts that as a church we may not be found wanting in this momentous crisis in the educational history of our beloved land.

This was followed by a Bengali paper on the Religious education of young People by Babu Rabindranath Tagore in his own inimitable style. The paper was written in

Bengali and has been published separately in the form of a pamphlet.

The Conference met again on the 28th morning at 7-30 A. M., when Pandit S. N. Sastri conducted divine service in English, after which the subject of "Work among Women" was taken up for consideration. A large number of ladies were present on the occasion. Babu Abinashchandra Majumdar first read the following paper contributed by Mrs. V. A. Shukhtankar, who owing to unavoidable circumstances could not be present :—

WOMEN'S WORK FOR WOMEN.

In Western countries where the broadening of women's education is one of the clearest marks of modern civilisation, the women of to-day are living in keenly progressive and spacious times. A spirit of youth pervades the atmosphere, of aspiration and a new fervour of living, and the signs and wholesome fruits of women's endeavour are seen in many widely different spheres of activity. The idea of self-realisation has taken hold of them and the power to live a larger life than women's was formerly are becoming more and more the ambition of the educated classes of women and the desire grows within them to lead others, less earnest and strenuously inclined to

share this full life of being up and doing, of learning, thinking, of entering with hearty interest into the world's large concerns—in a word to broaden for all of them their intellectual horizon, to develop the possibilities of their nature and to train their faculties for some particular field of usefulness.

The subject is a very interesting one, no doubt, affecting women of both the East and West ; but it is not my intention in this short paper to try to trace the history and dilate upon the causes which have given rise to the "Women's movement", as it is popularly called, which embraces the whole question of the opportunities, rights and duties of women. It makes a long story, a story as old as womankind, for every age and land has produced women whose nobility of spirit and achievements have been a material contribution to the good and progress of humanity, "whose thought has enriched the blood of the world." We have records of women who have changed the fate of nations, of warriors, even poets, acute thinkers and writers, women of pre-eminent intellectual powers or spiritual intensity who have lived, worked and died too when need came, for the sake of good causes. Such were by no means confined to the West ; the literature of the whole world is adorned with instances of great women, and that of ancient India has given us splendid examples of noble women characters in the Vedas

Upanishads and the Puranas. These are the world's notable women, it is true, but they have demonstrated what potentialities lie in the whole body of womenkind, and the memory of them has been a light on the path and an inspiration to "go and do likewise" to generations of women down to our own time. Their spirit endures and is as a germinating seed, producing noble fruit, often in unlikely places.

But although the power of individual women has shown itself in all times and places there was, until within recent years, no concentration of force which could be considered a "woman's movement" in the sense of the modern aspect which it has assumed. Now it is both intense and widespread, affecting not only a few women of the higher classes but even the masses, and there is not one field of activity which is open to men, excepting that of warfare, where women are not coming forward to share the world's work. No doubt there is very little to show of actual achievement so far, there scarcely has been time for substantial results, for the movement can hardly be said to have reached beyond its infancy, but its enthusiasm is so intense that the modern western atmosphere seems to be surcharged with it and wherever western culture spreads it carries with it the ideals of women's freedom and self-realisation.

Naturally this new spirit is making itself felt in India and an earnest desire is working among both the educated men and women of the country for the upliftment of Indian women. It is seen in the number of schools which have been started for female elementary education ; every small town and even many villages now have these schools, and beyond this we see a goodly number of women receiving higher education. The same forward spirit is to be observed in all the household ways and social relationships. Modern women wish to live differently from the "good old" ways of their grandmothers ; no longer are the young women of the family content to be under and submissive to the matriarchal sway of their mother-in-law, and their young ideas cannot brook the old fashioned restraints of manner and restrictions imposed in social intercourse. Now young husbands and wives think they should have their separate household, feeling that they are quite capable of managing their own affairs without the help, interference of their careful elders. Needless to say there are many among the orthodox portion of the Indian community and even a few amongst the social reformers who consider this state of things not altogether a pure blessing. And we need not be surprised if it has its disadvantageous aspect ; every reform movement, especially in its period of transition, is beset with

difficulties on all sides ; but they present no reason whatever for wishing to check the movement's progress. Our duty is to be cautious as far as possible and overcome any evils that may arise—not to allow our aims to be frustrated by dread of them. It is easy to sit idle and criticise but it is not this way that progress is achieved. Those who set out on a march on untrodden paths must expect to be pricked with thorns and bruised with falls. All honour to them if they can move onwards, not only with undaunted courage but looking all around them. Very often the heat of enthusiasm and the glamour of novelty make us blind and we must take every care to be sure that we are on the right path—that it is a true gleam which we are following and not a “will o’the wisp”.

In England the conditions of women's activity about half a century ago and the efforts made for women's betterment were not much dissimilar from those being made for women in India at the present time. So that accounts of the life and work of some of the women leaders of that period will be found specially instructive here. Even in England they still exercise a charm and have yet many lessons to teach the women of their country. In these fortunate times of every kind of communication between countries and nations the story of a noble and strenuous life becomes a common possession, and no doubt the works and lives of

these women are as much household knowledge to the ladies here as to English-women. There are several of whom mention might be usefully made but to one particularly distinguished woman-leader, who perhaps accomplished more for the cause of women than any other of her time, I will refer you. Her name, I have felt glad to hear, is quite familiar in India, especially in the Brahmo Samaj, more particularly perhaps for her writings on religious and philosophical subjects. I mean Miss Frances Power Cobbe. Probably many ladies here have read her fascinating Autobiography in which she describes, amongst other, such incidents as her acquaintance and meetings with Indians in London and relates in her lively, graceful style anecdotes of them. In that volume too is sketched the philanthropic work which she was engaged in for a time with her friend, Mary Carpenter, amongst the poor in Bristol. Even a slight acquaintance with her writings makes it easy to understand how her intellectual powers and attainments placed her with the leading minds of her day both among men and women. But her work in the higher ranges of literature does not here concern us. The attitude and utterances of a foremost woman-leader from youth to advanced age, of rare culture and strength of character have a special impressiveness and value for us now in the light of all that has transpired in the interval of 40 or 50 years since

she was strenuously working to gain women's admission to the universities, to secure their entrance into the medical profession and as a champion of women's legal and political rights. Her enthusiasm for the cause of women's advancement was founded on a whole-hearted belief in its righteousness and propriety. It was, however, by no means blind. On the contrary she saw with prophetic insight the pitfalls into which her sex might easily fall through taking limited or superficial views and by unsteady impulses. In a series of Lectures addressed to ladies in London and afterwards published in book-form under the title, "Duties of Women," widely read, I hear, in India, she made these noteworthy remarks:—"There are rocks ahead. Our course towards a free and ennobled womanhood is by no means a secure and safe one. Nor should we altogether condemn those among us who see these dangers more clearly than the advantageous we promise and deprecate the changes to which we look so hopefully. What is it which must determine whether this great change fraught with such infinite consequences to humanity will be a benefit or an injury, a blessing or a curse? It must be the conduct of women themselves during the great transition—The way we pass through the process of emancipation, the tone we adopt, the principles which we choose to guide us." Further she adds, "I fail to find words to say

how important it seems to me that at this crisis of women's history every one of us should, each in her small way, begin to tread the new path carefully, giving no just cause of reproach or scandal or ridicule, and always in the right direction, not only of a larger and freer life but of a life of higher self-reverence, broader piety, more tender goodness, purer purity, truer truth."

More than a quarter of a century has elapsed since these words were spoken but with equal appropriateness they can be applied in the conditions prevailing in England even now, for the transitionary period of women's development is not passed, and in every fresh step which has been taken it has been seen that progress brings its own grave disorders. In advanced Indian society also, as more and more it absorbs the things of the West we find not only similar conditions with their accompanying dangers but with its own difficulties, added due chiefly to the new culture not being indigenous. And until it strikes true roots of its own the imitation which we see so often is bound to express itself in distorted ideas and confused aims and even may go some way to destroy the spirit of truth.

The conflict between the old and new life of India is not confined to one or two divisions but extends over its whole domain. Not only the matters of lofty importance as principles and

ideals are involved but the trivial affairs of daily usage and custom ; and in regard to these a peculiar responsibility rests with the women. Nor must we glance at this aspect as being of slight consequence. Although we may be emancipated and in a position to share the intellectual enjoyments of our husbands and brothers, and with them cultivate and learn to exercise public spirit, yet *women* we remain with home as our centre, our high place of honour, where we find our best opportunity and should find it our chief joy to shed sweetness and light. And only as women of such a type can we hope to reach our sisters around us and be in a position to exercise a truly uplifting influence on their lives. Otherwise we often see sharp divisions taking place between the older type of Indian ladies and those in the modern ranks. The former, in coming to the homes of their young relatives and friends, perhaps from a little village where the modern ideas have scarcely penetrated, find the new ways bewildering and feel almost as strange as if they were in the houses of foreigners. And on their side perhaps the modern young ladies are making mental comparisons rather to the others' detriment and feeling even a little shame at their old friends, reminders of "other manners, other times." That this is not just as it should be all are ready to acknowledge. Such sharp divisions are very painful and harmful.

But the new order of things has come to remain. A full tide is flowing in and no checks can hinder its advance. And certainly so many of the new things and ways are good and desirable—the acquisition by women of every branch of learning in which they have their contribution to offer, active interest in all kinds of public affairs which, notwithstanding what the anti-suffragists may say to the contrary, are sure to be benefitted by the special understanding which women will bring to them as a result of seeing from a point of view which man can never command ; freedom in social intercourse, where women ought to have the ‘leading place ; the modern pleasant refinements in daily house-hold matters. All these we cannot afford to do without and must zealously cultivate them. It is equally true too that there is much of good in the old style of Indian life. I have had a few fortunate opportunities of meeting ladies of the older type in their homes and have been charmed with their sweet goodness, their self-sacrifice, devotion, intense family affection and have been strongly impressed with their superior skill in domestic management. Very often they merit Tennysons’ tribute to just this type—

“Not learned save in gracious house-hold ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt

In angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
 Interpreter between the gods and men,
 Who looked all native to her place, and yet
 On tip-toe seemed to touch upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
 Swayed to her from their orbits as they moved
 And girdled her with music. Happy he
 With such a mother."

Europeanised modes of living have their charms, no doubt, but it is a blending of the two that will make the truest and sweetest Indian homes ; the spirit of the Indian life and character should assimilate the modern Western ways. Therefore they must be harmoniously united. Can this be done and how ? Only one thing is needful but it is an all-important one. It is the cultivation of the right spirit in our new freedom, to hold before us and carefully cherish as our ideal "a life of higher self-reverence, broader piety, more tender goodness, purer purity, truer truth." If this spirit be carried into all our ways and works many of, nay all, the dangers which beset the path of women's progress will vanish as if touched by a magician's wand. Then although the coveted things will remain new learning, new ideas, wider freedom, Europeanised houses, new forms of dress and manners, speech and hospitality, the whole atmosphere which we create will be full of gentleness, a large tole-

rance, sincerity and simplicity. Thus the true culture will take root and spread and bring forth abundant and goodly fruit.

And naturally in any work which we try to do for others this truth applies: "The spirit is the life", and only the cultivation of the right spirit will produce in us those qualities of the soul by which we can hope to reach the souls of others for their upliftment. Those whom we wish to help must realise in us something other than a wish to add on interest to our lives by taking up social reform work or to do good as the dry phrase goes. They must actually gain from contact with us some realisation of a spiritual ideal whereby their inner lives will be strengthened and enriched, and feel that from our hearts to theirs a simple, warm—not condescending—regard flows out naturally. Otherwise, however hard we may work, even with the aid of highly trained ability we shall remain at a distance from them and can effect only a surface improvement in their condition and their inner lives will continue blank and dreary as before. To compass this we must earnestly cultivate our own soul-life; there must be the inner vision, holy times when we see deep into our own hearts and are blessed with a revelation from the most High God, and the vanity of our hearts is melted and the vain shows of the world lose for us their false importance and becoming as little

children, meek and lowly in heart, we can see God.

Such a spirit must form the basis of all our work, especially of the ladies who have the privilege of belonging to the Brahmo Samaj, which has been primarily a religious movement. The Brahmo Samaj has done pioneer work in the up-raising of Indian women : hard were the struggles and severe the persecutions which the early Brahmos had to suffer in this cause. For the emancipated and educated women's new life in India, with old superstitions left behind, useless and pernicious customs discarded, age-old cruelties and wrongs over-thrown we may feel devout and ardent thankfulness to those brave souls. The deep debt of gratitude we owe to them can best be discharged by infusing in us the devout spirit which was the motive of all their work. The leaders of the Brahmo Samaj have often said and rightly, that religious reform must be the main-spring of all national activities, and this applies with equal truth to women's activities. Many earnest efforts have been made for the spread of Brahmoism but the movement will never be permanent or wide-spread till it has taken firm hold of the hearts of women. And here rests a great responsibility with us, which we can fulfil if Brahmoism becomes a reality and a living inspiration of our lives. Then will the success of the Brahmo

Samaj be ensured and also the whole work for women will be placed on a sound basis, this is true too of another aspect of religion that is, of morals. Comte thought that the feminine characteristics of humanity best represent its perfection, and a great living writer on Ethics asserts that moral progress consists in the substitution of the feminine qualities for the masculine ones. Humility, gentleness, obedience, love, compassion, resignation are all feminine virtues and as civilisation advances their supremacy will be increasingly acknowledged. These virtues are a sacred treasure entrusted to our keeping, which we must carefully guard for the good of humanity. In short, the best work of women for women and the best and surest method of doing it is founded on our following Shakespere's precept—"To thine own self be true." We should cultivate the true woman-spirit within us and good work must inevitable follow "as the night the day," and it will be done without giving the least cause of offence. For the root of all these virtues is love which "doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Even in the common things as dress, entertaining guests, house-management and decoration and such matters women's spirit clearly expresses itself and becomes an influence for good or otherwise in a widening circle. Small

though these things seem they reflect our ideas, sympathies and ambitions with more distinctness and give a truer impression of our character than perhaps any other phase of our life does. To take the case of house-decoration, which is a very commendable and happy phase of modern Indian life, if we have a genuine, growing love for the spirit of beauty our ways and homes are sure to have grace and sweetness in them. On the other hand mere imitation which makes itself evident in meaningless display results in all manner of incongruities and lack of harmony. The something which we call "taste" is not a technical term for artist's use or something which can be donned as a fashionable garment on showy occasions, but is a clear manifestation of the soul within—the evidence of a sincere love and earnest cultivation of that which is true, noble, gentle and gracious.

There is so much work to be done for uplifting the women of this land, which can be best done by their own enlightened and cultured sisters. A wide-spread awakening has commenced among Indian women; a vast field of opportunity offers for a great variety of work and the times seem ripe. Some are ready to receive and some to give. Already in different parts of the country institutions have been started for giving many kinds of assistance to women. Especially I think of the one in Bombay, the Sewa-sadan, in which educa-

tional classes are held, practical instruction in several arts is given, lectures arranged, medical aid and advice are available and the purely social side receives careful attention. They have also a hope of forming a kind of Sister-hood of workers, to take up residence in the building, after the manner of the Women's University Settlements in England, which have become an established feature in philanthropic work there. The workers are to devote their whole time and energies to the different branches of the work going on in the institution and to make home-visitation a means of help to many. How far the idea has been put into practice as yet, I do not know, but I can well believe that the time will come when this will be a pretty generally adopted method of women's work for women. The Sewa-sadan is the only institution of the kind I have seen in India; there may be similar ones in other places; and small or large, they are calculated to become radiating centres of light and progress. And they are a double benefit, for in the management of the work varied abilities are brought into action and a latent faculty for organisation finds scope, which will go far to encourage public spirit in women which by and by is sure to be utilised increasingly for the public weal.

One can think of several kinds of work which might be undertaken; but I leave to others who

have a much more intimate knowledge of the exact needs of Indian women than myself to advance such schemes of work and practical details. My aim is only to emphasise in our minds one simple thought—that of the importance of *being* before *doing*. In our anxiety that evils should cease and to help the advent of a brighter day, we are tempted to attach primary importance to the thought of what we can do for others, whereas what we can be to them is of infinitely more value. Good works will grow out of self-culture as its flower and fruit and “the unconscious and indirect philanthropy of faithfulness to ourselves is often the best and furthest-reaching.”

Mrs. Hemanta Kumar Chaudhuri, next addressed the meeting in Hindi and made an earnest and impressive appeal for more vigorous measures on the part of the Brahmo Samaj for the amelioration of the condition of women in India. She was followed by Mrs. Sarojinee Naidu, who gave an eloquent address in her exquisite style.

Babu Hem Chandra Sarkar, M.A., of Calcutta, then read the following paper on “How to cope with the growing needs of the Theistic movement” :—

Mr. President, Brother-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With your permission I would like to draw your earnest attention to what seems to me one of the most serious problems facing the Theistic movement of India at the present day. I look upon our Theism as the future religion of humanity. This pure spiritual worship of the one true God, with its natural corollaries of the Brotherhood and service of humanity is, to me, the grandest revelation of divine love, the loftiest development of the spiritual potentialities of men. Even those who are not very friendly to the Brahmo Samaj admit that the ideal of the Brahmo Samaj is high and unimpeachable. The chief criticism that has so far been directed towards the Theistic movement is the insignificance of its actual achievements. Our adversaries say that while some of the religious bodies of the day, old and new, are making great progress, the Brahmo Samaj after three quarters of a century consists of a handful of men and women scattered over this vast teeming continent. Though this is not a fair estimate either of the past achievements or of the present position of the Brahmo Samaj, we need not concern ourselves to rebut it. The point underlying this necessarily one-sided criticism deserves our earnest consideration. We, who say and believe that our religion is to be the future religion of whole humanity, may be justly

called upon to vindicate that faith and hope by past achievements and present symptoms. People may justly ask what grounds have we with our present rate of progress to hope that our faith will one day spread over the whole world? We ourselves should periodically make searching reviews of our position and prospect. Is our past history and present situation such as would reasonably entitle us to believe that ours is to be a world religion?

To be frank, our present situation does not lend much support to our noble ambition on behalf of our church; you will please note, that here I am speaking of our church and not of our faith. The outstanding feature of our movement at the present time is want, weakness, inadequacy. Our movement does not look, except in the eye of faith, as one of youthful energy, exuberent enthusiasm, militant power. We have not as yet approached the threshold of a career of world-conquest. We cannot yet think of a serious foreign mission. We are not able to meet the crying needs at home. There are hundred avenues of useful service opened at our very doors but we have neither the men nor the means to utilise them. From every quarter comes the cry, give us men, give us workers, give us materials, and we are meeting it either with silence which is often misinterpreted as indifference or a point blank non-

possumas. If the words of the prophet, the harvest indeed is plenty but labourers few, were ever true, they are now and here with us in the Brahmo Samaj. The most obvious fact before us is the inadequacy of our resources in comparison with our great needs. And it is incumbent upon you, Brother-delegates, as the chosen representatives of the Theistic organisations of the land in conference assembled, to devise means for adjusting the balance.

A progressive word-religion like ours should and must be able to enlist in its service a continuous and ever-increasing army of men and women. The early history of Buddhism Christianity and Mahamadanism hold before us concrete examples of the missionary activities of a militant church. The early days of the Brahmo Samaj were not altogether unworthy of its great mission. Raja Ram Mohan Roy showed an example of a whole-hearted devotion which spared neither wealth nor energy, neither body nor mind, culminating in premature death in a far off foreign land brought about, it is believed, by overwork aggravated by actual poverty and anxiety. Maharshi Devendra Nath inaugurated a hopeful era of enthusiastic missionary activity, which was largely expanded by Brahmananda Keshub Chandra Sen and his worthy lieutenants. The foundation of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj saw a laudable outburst

of propagandist enthusiasm, which was not unworthy of the great cause. Indeed the missionary enthusiasm of the early days of the Brahmo Samaj is a noble and creditable episode in its history. Samaj and many of the incidents of that memorable era can compare favourably with the wonderful record of devotion and sacrifice in the history of the spread of Buddhism and Christianity. Our missionaries, some of whom are happily still with us, travelled hundreds of miles, laboured under chronic and cruel privations, often without food for days, with no change of dress, no place to lay their head under. The memory of the sacrifices and sufferings of that glorious band should be handed down to the posterity among the most precious legacies of our church.

But since then a strange and what is to me an inexplicable shrinkage in missionary enthusiasm has come upon the Brahmo Samaj. That high ardour, that eager desire to consecrate one's life to the service of the Church has been visibly and steadily on the decline in our midst and it seems likely that when the few veterans whom God in his mercy has yet spared to us, will pass away, we shall be like sheep without a shepherd. I shall not attempt to analyse here the causes which have led to this deplorable decline of the missionary spirit in our midst. That is a subject requiring in its importance and vastness, separate and careful

consideration by itself. I must content myself with the remark that it deserves the earnest and urgent attention of the Theistic Church, as one on which its very existence depends. The accession of new missionaries, the flowing in of the new blood seems to me to have almost ceased—the fountain has stopped and the current is likely to dry away in no time. Here is a momentous crisis in the history of the Theistic movement of India. Around us I see signs of ominous gravity and not only in Bengal but in almost every great centre of the Theistic movement there seem to be some mysterious causes at work positively discouraging to, if not altogether annihilating the growth of the missionary spirit. And unless the tide is turned soon, the future of the movement will be gloomy.

The time has come, it seems to me, when there should go out another cry from the heart of the Theistic Church for greater devotion to and larger sacrifice for her ideals on the part of her sons and daughters. People have begun to say that theism is not capable of engendering great devotion and heroic sacrifice? Shall that sneer go unchallenged? Will not men and women in the Brahmo Samaj prove with the unanswerable argument of actual life and conduct that devotion to God and love of man, pure Spiritual Theism, is the greatest, the most powerful inspiring force, to call us to scorn comfort and live laborious days. Oh for a prophet

at whose call our lethargy, our vulgar worldliness
our little-minded absorption in the pursuit of the
tinsels of earth will pass away and we shall once
more learn to feel with our ancestors,

এষাশ্চ পরমা গতি রেষাশ্চ পরমাসম্পদ্

এষাশ্চ পরম লোক এষাশ্চ পরমানন্দঃ ।

“He is his great object in life, He is his
most precious treasure.
He is his one goal, he is his supreme joy.”

What is needed to day is a powerful and per-
sistent call for the consecration of life to the service
of God. We must have a band, an army of
devoted men and women to whom the one passion,
the one joy of their life will be to uphold the banner.
to spread the message of the Brahmo Samaj. It
has become a well known saying in the Brahmo
Samaj that every Brahmo is a missionary. That
is certainly what it ought to be, and to some extent
it was so in the past. A very large share of the
work of the Brahmo Samaj was done by men and
women who were not professed missionaries ; and
I shall hope that in future also it will be so. But
a religious movement, with a serious mission can
not go on without a regular organised body of men
and women whose exclusive work will be to look
after its work. A vast expansion of the missionary
force of the Samaj is essential, if its ideals are not
to remain a mere dream, an idle talk.

And then the missionary force must be supplied with the necessary material resources. Our mission operations have most sadly been hampered for lack of financial support. The least creditable feature of the modern Theistic movement of India has perhaps been its finances. The missionary supply in our community has not been adequate ; but we need not be ashamed of the manner in which some of our men, few though they be, have in response to the divine call devoted themselves to the service of the Church. Indeed we can justly be proud of them ; theirs was a truly apostolic spirit, taking no thought for the morrow, what they shall eat or what they shall put on, going forth to declare the message of the Lord taking with them neither scrip nor money, but trusting entirely on the mercy of the Father. But can we point out to any thing like it in the general body of our fellow-believers ? I do not expect that the entire community will live in the spirit of the apostolic faith—"take no thought for the morrow." But surely it can be expected of a community believing itself to be the custodians of the future religion of humanity that in its history there will be numerous instances of large benefactions, great endowments, magnificent sacrifices. In the history of all serious religious movements we find men and women who brought their all and consecrated it at the alter of God. How rare have been such

examples in our community ! The Brahmo Samaj is not a rich community, but poor as we are, we could also produce among ourselves types of the blessed widow who brought her last mite at the altar of God, of the woman who stripped herself naked to give her only belonging in response to the call of the master. I have been greatly puzzled over this strange barrenness of the Brahmo Samaj—a liberal faith with such illiberal heart, an open tongue with a close fist. Sometimes I am inclined to believe that Brahmoism instead of enlarging over hearts has perhaps contracted it, instead of making us generous, has made us mean. Else how are we to account for this dearth of liberality in our midst. We have but a few missionaries, and we do not pay them at a lavish scale ; practically we have nothing of what is called a mission ; and yet there is a chronic cry of deficit ; everywhere we meet with the same sorry spectacle of most urgently needed beneficent works, pampered or totally stopped for want of funds. The Theistic movement of India by the grace of God, has become a well-known organisation with a high prestige of its own. I think we might say, that of all the religious bodies of India to-day, the Brahmo Samaj is the most widely known and universally respected throughout the civilised world. But if any one were to analyse its annual budget of income and expenditure he could

not but be ashamed. Leaving alone any comparison with the religious bodies of the West, the Brahmo Samaj stands in a very unfavourable light even among the other religious organisations of India of the present day in its financial aspect. We cannot refute the charge that we spend too little for our religion. Many of you are aware that it was not possible to include in the rules of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj a clause requiring the members to pay a subscription of one per cent of their income to the Samaj. And yet one of the ten fundamental conditions of membership in the Arya Samaj is to pay a subscription of ten per cent to the Samaj. In my travels through the Punjab, I was repeatedly struck in being pointed out not in one place, not in one city but in town after town; magnificent buildings, mandirs or schools, as the gift of one single individual. If you open any denominational paper of any European country, you will find in every issue numerous bequests to church institutions ; such benefactions were not altogether unknown in our country also. But it is curiously significant that in the history of the Brahmo Samaj such legacies have been so rare. There has not been a single case, I believe, with the noble exception of that of the late Sirdar Dayal Singh Majithia of Lahore, who, by the way, was not an anushthanic Brahmo, of a member leaving at his death all his belongings for the

benefit of his church. The largest direct benefaction to the church will, perhaps be the one announced the other day in the papers viz, that of Seth Damodardas Govardhandas Sukhadwala of Bombay, who with the young Raja of Pithapur, shares at present the distinction of being the most generous benefactors of the Theistic movement in India.

With these facts before us, I think, we cannot but admit that we give too little to our church. Yet I would not accept the conclusion to which they may justly lead, viz, that religion is not the uppermost thing in our heart. I do believe that of the Brahmo Samaj as a whole it might be said that no religious body of the present is more earnestly concerned about religion than it. The fact seems to me to be that we have not thought seriously about our individual responsibilities in this respect ; we have let the matter drift on, thinking each of us that others who are in a more affluent condition than himself will do what is needed. A wrong tradition has most unfortunately been established in our community. We have had a very noble and commendable standard grown up in our midst as to individual loyalty to the principles and ideals of the church. Hundreds of men and women in our midst, have not shrunk for a moment to make the tremendous sacrifice of the heart—being cut off from father, mother, friends,

home, society, for the sake of their principles ; and yet the very same men and women have been wanting when faced with the far less difficult sacrifice of the purse. Of course there are honourable exceptions. But I am speaking only of the generality now. I have not time to analyse the cause of this anomaly ; what I want to submit before you, brethren, is that this wrong and ruinous tradition must be changed ; we must resolve to spend more largely for our religion, if it is to be the power, the leaven for the betterment of our land, for the good of humanity which we wish it to be. Our present contributions are far too inadequate in comparison with our needs. I know that there is room for some economy, that with a more judicious organisation with closer and more harmonious co-ordination of the existing resources some saving might be made ; but I have not thought it necessary to take notice of it here ; that is after all, very insignificant. What is most urgently needed is a large increase in the amount of our contributions to the church. We must recognise that what we have been so far spending for our religion is utterly inadequate for the needs, shamefully unworthy of our ideals. To make the resources adequate to our needs we must, each one of us, make a solemn inward resolve, that henceforth I shall give to my church a great deal more than I have been doing. Let there be a high ideal

in the Brahmo Samaj in this respect as in others. Let the superiority of our religion be manifest in this that we spend for religion—for the service of God and humanity more than others do. Every serious religion has developed a certain standard of charity among its followers. The Jews of old used to bring one tenth of all their earnings before the altar of God ; the Christians accepted and continued the Jewish tradition of the tithe. The Mahammadans had a still higher standard of charity. Would it be too much to ask the believers in spiritual theism to give a similar amount to their church? I would propose that let the Theistic church of India adopt it as its deliberate opinion that a man should spend at least a tenth part of his income for religious and charitable purposes. I do not want it to pass any compulsory rule ; I know that paper rules are of little value, but let us slowly develop among ourselves a public opinion that every man should spend at least a tenth part of his earnings for God and humanity—that we must not live for ourselves only, that our earthly possessions are not for our pleasure and comfort only—that it is unworthy of a Brahmo not to spend at least one tenth of his income, that is to say, at least as much as the followers of many other religions, over which we think it necessary to improve, for religious and charitable purposes.

I would plead most earnestly, passionately,

Brethren, for a large sacrifice in the Brahmo Samaj ; otherwise I do not see any hope of realising our high ideal. Let as many amongst us as can consecrate themselves to the service of the church and others, who do not see their way to such a course let them contribute liberally to the funds of the Samaj. Let a new standard, a new tradition of sacrifice grow in our midst. Things cannot stand where they are; we must adjust our balance, we must square our contributions to the large and growing needs of our Church.

On the 28th evening there was a public meeting under the auspices of the Conference, which was largely attended. The proceedings commenced with a short prayer offered by the President, Babu Rajani Kanta Guha, M.A., Babu Benoyendranath Sen and Dr. D. N. Mallik then addressed the meeting. Mr. T. L. Vaswani M. A. had sent the following paper, which was read by Mr. Benoy Mohan Sehanabis :—

A SOCIAL INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION

Systematic theology has approached the Truth of Religion from two stand-points—the dogmatic and the speculative.

The dogmatic view-point was right in so far as it emphasised the great idea that the *summum bonum* of life is *salvation* interpreted as the *beatific*

Vision of God. But it erred in so far as it canonised *tradition*, ignoring the Living Original of Truth. Its antique philosophy, its artificial arguments, its assumption of the infallibility of dogmas fail of their appeal to the modern mind. Neither the Church, nor 'the philosopher (Aristotle) can be our final Court of appeal ; and we but smile as we read the reply given to the young man who said that he had seen the spots on the sun—the reply which is thus recorded :—"My son", said the priest, "I have read Aristotle many times and I assure you he says nothing of spots on the sun." The dogmatic stand-point is discredited.

The second view—the speculative approach to the problem of Religion—is associated with many honoured names in modern philosophy, the most distinguished of them being that of Hegel who defines Religion as "the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind." The speculative or intellectualistic view does well to show the importance of the *way* of *knowledge*. Intellect has its high and honoured place in life and therefore in systematic theology. Surely Benjamin Kidd went too far in his critique of Buckle's theory of human progress when he argued that intellect had no 'survival value' ! The religious conception of the Universe must accept the challenge of the intellect ; the theistic world-view must be rational.

But what the speculative or intellectualistic theory forgets is that thought or intellect is an expression of *sociality*. And the Truth of Religion, I maintain, must be approached to-day from the *social* or *humanistic* point of *view*. And this for several reasons. Consider the following :—

The differentia of man is not intelligence but *personality* involving the two characteristics of *self-consciousness* and *self-determination*. And personality is constituted by *sociality*. Fichte has well declared "man would not be rational or human he were isolated."

For a long time truth has been regarded as a system of abstract concepts. But truth would not be what it is—a *system*, an articulated organism of experience—if it were a group of abstract concepts. Truth is reality ; and the *real* functions ; and what function has *value* (which is more than *Utility*) for human life. Every truth has a *social value*, a value for human life ; and every movement of Reform such as the Brahmo Samaj must justify its existence by meeting the challenge of the question. What is it doing to secure a *new social adjustment* to the supreme ideal which is not a static concept but a Dynamic Reality perpetually operating for the uplift of man ?

Morality too has social value : the good functions : it lives and grows : the evil decays and passes away being transmuted into the 'stuff' of

good ; the evil cannot adjust itself to the eternal in our environment. Duty is *Dharma* : it is what we owe to the Social Organism of which the Life-Principle is God. The moral must be socialised ; else it becomes individualistic, anarchic. Kant had to overcome the individualism involved in his theory of the "autonomy of the will" when he formulated his moral Law:—"Act at all times from a maxim fit for *universal law*." Conscience is a consciousness of the fact—the sacred fact—that we share in the life of a mystical Social Whole, that therefore to seek private selfish ends is to commit moral suicide.

This *social* reference must, I maintain, receive special recognition in the realm of Religion. It is a profound truth disclosed by studies in Sociology that Religion develops as social consciousness. Religion does not appear as an incident, an 'epiphenomenon' in the history of man. Religion is a *characteristic function* of Race-consciousness, developing as Art, Science, Literature, Government. And the function of religion—its purpose in the economy of world-evolution—is to check the forces of degeneration which appear in the social process of the time-life we—children of the eternal—are called upon to live. By controlling instincts, by training emotions, by co-ordinating intellect with intuition, by developing Will-power. Religion *works* as a powerful reaction against *de-generation*.

The mission of Religion may be indicated in one word—Regeneration. So it is that religion is at once a vision and a work ; and he the Master to whom this week is sacred prayed :—"I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil."

Friends and Fellow-Worshippers ! will allow you me to record my opinion that the Brahmo Samaj is losing her hold upon the life of India? I make this confession not because I love my church less, but because I love Truth more. And the more I survey the situation the more I feel that many fair hopes centred in the Brahmo Samaj have failed : our movement does not seem to move much : its *potential* energy is not yet become *kinetic*.

The reason, as I apprehend it, is : the Brahmo Samaj has not been eager to utilise its opportunities heritage, talents and vision to enter the *social process* of the life of the people. Let me submit to your thoughtful attention a few points indicating what I believe to be the equipment essential to our Samaj if she is to participate in a larger measure than she does to-day in the *social process* and so to become a progressive Power—not alone an honoured force but a mighty force—for the uplift of India and the world.

(1) We must recognise the value of Tradition. The over-emphasis of tradition by the Roman Church led to the Reformation Movement ; the

over-emphasis of tradition by orthodox Hinduism led to the Brahmo Samaj. But the time is come to recognise, in a larger measure than we have done so far, that these traditions treasure great truths, which are eternal. The *rationalistic* way of interpreting the old dispensation must give way to the *evolutionary* one: we must not canonise tradition; but neither must we reject it. We can submit to no dogma of the past; but neither must we ignore the truth that these dogmas have their source in certain *spiritual experiences* of the race—a long-lived race—which is vital still. In many quarters to-day our brethren fight shy of Hinduism. Let me make a bold confession. I am not ashamed of the word “Hindu.” The name “Hindu” carries with it for me a privilege more precious than words may tell. As with years, I grow to understand more and more the shaping spirit of the Hindu race-consciousness—its synthetic genius, its ardour for the Absolute, its mystical insight into the Unseen, its love of the interior life, its yearning for the eternal immanent but not immersed in the stream of time—I am grateful for the great heritage vouchsafed me as a member of the ancient Hind race; and I should wish for no better summing up of my life than this:—

“He died a lover of the Hindu Race and a seeker after Brahma.”

Old ecclesiasticism is giving way to new nationalism ; and the time is come for us to study to the Social roots of our religion. Our theism should be more reforming. less aggressive, more Eastern, less rationalistic, more filled with the spirit of him who said he came to fulfil and not to destroy, less infected with the notions of the 18th century "Enlightenment which idolised critical reasoning and ignored constructive Reason—the higher Reason charged with faith and Intuition.

(2) We must develop '*Church-Consciousness*' I am afraid our 'church-consciousness' is weakening year after year. Our cry for faith is divine ; no less divine is the soul's yearning for *Freedom, Fellowship* and *Solidarity*. We needs must remember that the individual life is shaped by collective life. The craving of the old Hindu heart for fellowship with the pure and devout—the craving for *Sat-Sang* must be developed if we are to make our theism rich, vital, progressive. The more I think of it the more I feel that we have not yet out-grown the ultra-individualism of the early part of the last century—the individualism which regarded society as merely 'external.' We must recognise the truth that our deeper self is realised in *sat-sang*. To quote the words of a distinguished English divine:—"Our weak faith may at times be permitted to look through the eye of some strong soul" and "it may thereby gain a sense of the

certainly of spiritual things which before we had not." The growth of *religious individualism* in the Brahmo Samaj is perilous ; and the earlier we rise above it the better for us and the Sacred cause. Let us live as members of the vaster Social mind—let us live the larger life of the Spiritual Environment of our Samaj ; and let our church-consciousness find channels of expression in united family-worship and theological colleges : there is lack alas ! of both.

(3) We must recover our lost corporate feeling. Our divisions and lack of combination afford opportunities for adverse comment to our critics and are, I am sure a matter of daily deepening regret to all who love the Sacred Cause. It is because so many in our midst approach religion from the *speculative* rather than the *social*, the rationalistic rather than the humanistic stand-point that we emphasise points of difference. A beautiful *sloka* of Kabir has the following :—

"The men who read and read big books,
Learn wisdom none the more
He is a sage who once has learnt
Of Love the letters four."

Who need to remember this *sloka* of our great mediæval sage. O let there be a larger number of men in our midst to cry for the *Wisdom of Love*. Without being disloyal to our distinctive deno-

minations, can we not emphasise our *points of union* ? The Eternal is patient of our differences ; can we not—members of the different sections of the Samaj—constitute one great Federation of Hindu Theists for the service of India and the glory of God ? Surely with harmony of aim and a sincere desire to be loyal in our service and devotion to One God we can co-operate in all social work for the uplift of the Land. And can we not also unite for *worship*, and as members of One Body adore the one without a Second ? The unity of spiritual worship rather than the uniformity of doctrinal belief is our urgent need to-day. “ In the day the sections of the Samaj discern their Unity in diversity, and realise that they are but as diverse wings in the many mansioned Home of the One Parent-Spirit—in that day shall the Benedictions which rest upon the Brahma Samaj be renewed and the New Church of God shall enter upon a New expansive period of her life for the help and healing of this Ancient people. Would I had the power to tell you, Believers in the Theistic Dispensation, what the Samaj could do in the unity of worship and the solidarity of social work ! Shall we not pray ?

‘Forgive O Lord ! our severing ways,
The separate alters that we raise,
The varying tongues that speak Thy praise.’

(4) We must awaken *a new sense of personal value*. The Theism of the Brahma Samaj must be in touch with life : this, indeed, is essentially involved in a social interpretation of Religion. The *life-values* of the theistic faith must engage our attention more than the metaphysics of belief. We must, I repeat, enter the *social process* : our message must be more than a 'creed of culture' more than a 'rational religion.' Mathew Arnold meant more than his words express when he declared in his "Literature and Dogma"—that he thought 'Messrs Moody and Sankey masters in the philosophy of history compared with Prof. Clifford.' Touch with life gives more insight than academic investigations. The Samaj must be in touch with life—life not alone as it is reflected in the conventions of 'respectable' classes, but life as it beats its strong sturdy music among the motley millions of the masses. A mediæval story tells us of a priest who heard the voice of God calling him and he the priest cried "where art Thou, O Lord?" And the answer came, "I thy Lord am among the People." Yes, our Lord is among the people—among the masses whom we have long neglected. I am afraid our masses are most miserably poor—poor in every way except in the potentialities of immortal souls. All honour to Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Rev. Shinde and others who work to-day for the 'submerged' classes ! Such men are the real knights

of the Holy Spirit ; and when their number grows, the Samaj shall go forth with sunshine in her heart' to bless and elevate the motley millions of this Land.

It is necessary to add that our work for the masses must be charged with a sense of the infinite value of every soul. The Samaj must develop a sense of personality in India : her social institutions must all seek to draw out the life of higher emotions, intellect and will. This sense of the personal as distinguished from the *economic* value of every human being must inspire her in her efforts to educate boys and girls to improve the condition of criminal classes, to crush the demon of drink, to raise the status of women, and charge the democracy of the age with the dynamic of the soul-life. So may the people know that the new church of God is come to break—the words of the late Prof. Caird are appropriate here—"all the walls of division that have hitherto separated individuals, families and nations from each other"; for "she casts aside and utterly repudiates all the prejudices of rank and caste, of race and customs, and bids men as simply men, recognise each other as brethren."

(5) We must quicken some young men to a pure sense of the service of the God-in-man.

Lewes Dickinson in his "Letters of a Chinese Official" has a touching passage which I feel tempted to quote :—

“When I review”, he says, “my impressions of the average English Citizen, impressions based on many years’ study, what kind of man do I see? I see one divorced from nature but unreclaimed by art; instructed but not educated; assimilative but incapable of thought. Trained in the tenet of a religion in which he does not really believe—for he sees it flatly contradicted in every relation of life—he dimly feels that it is prudent to conceal under a mask of piety the atheism he is hardly intelligent enough to avow; and what is more, his morals are as conventional as his creed.”

I am afraid a similar remark may safely be made with regard to the average Indian citizen. Some young men are needed to stem the rising tide of secularism. Young men are the trustees of the future. Yet a good many of them are busy with many things except the one thing needful. Some of them are bold enough to confer the creed of Nietzsche and say with him :—“Egoism belongs to the essence of the distinguished soul” ! “And verily to learn to love oneself is no command for to-day and to-morrow. Rather of all arts this is the finest, subtlest, latest and most enduring.”

This false theory of life masquerading under the concept of ‘Superman’ has tickled the fancy of a number of our promising young men. It is the duty of our Samaj to build up a Band of Young Men loyal to the spiritual law of character which is

the Law of Service. Expansion of self through Social Service—this is the one supreme lesson which some of our young men must learn in this hour of our great need. Dr. Ames has a beautiful little remark in his “Psychology of Religious Experience” ; he says :—“The psychological criterion of a man’s religion is the degree and range of his social consciousness.” And the range of social consciousness is widened with devotion to the good of others. Self-sacrifice is self-expression, self-realisation, self-expansion ; and blessed they who are ready to pour out their life on others ; for they experience the joys of the Spirit which transcend mental and æsthetic pleasures as much as these transcend sensual ease ; they realise the truth that we are meant to live and work as sons of the Eternal Whose highest holiest human word is *Ananda*.

(6) But this social consciousness in order that it may be deepened and developed to its true proportions must be nourished by *daily communion with God*.

The *bhakti* movement which under the Providence of God was led by the pure and peerless Keshub-chander was the *inward* force which made the Brahmo Samaj of his days a mighty forward movement. For ever the law holds true : No forward movement without an inward movement. Not till His Love touch our social consciousness may we have the strength to serve, and not till we

surrender ourselves in self-emptiness at his Holy Alter does He take us up and fill us with His Great Breath to breathe benediction and love on all we meet along the pathways of our life. So it is that the great redeemers and burden-bearers of the Race have drawn upon the resources of the Unseen ; they have served and suffered believing that the Lord is with them ; they have wandered in the wilderness convinced that they are not alone but that they follow Him who brings us through the dark to the gates of Light and through the death of the passing self to the life Eternal.

Sisters and Brothers of the Brahmo Samaj, many and pressing are the problems of to-day. There is the economical problem ; there is the educational problem ; there is the social problem ; there is the political problem ; underlying all these problems is the Religious Problem, the problem of the relation of Faith to Science and Life. And each may contribute something to the solution of the problem. Each one has a duty to do, a part to play, function to fulfil, a service to give in the economy of the universe each one can render some service ; some can give their treasure, others their talents, others still their time—all their thoughts—for the service of the Sacred Cause. None so poor and weak but can render some service. When the farmer in the story approached Tolstoy for help, Tolstoy put his hands in th

pocket but finding it empty said, "Brother, I am sorry I have nothing to give," and the farmer touched by the affectionate words of the Russian sage, replied :—"But you called me brother—that was a great gift." So it is that in small things and in great we can *serve* the Sacred Cause. Oh for a new Band of God's workers, ready in mind and ready in heart to wander from place to place as servants of the New Church. Raise Thou such a Band, Eternal Spirit ! Raise Thou some in our midst who may make the venture of Faith and enrol themselves servants of Thy Church ; raise Thou some who may study to serve her ; and be rich to enrich her and be great to glorify her, and be strong to give all, to bear all, to suffer all for her sake—even for the sake of the new dispensation of thy Spirit,

There are converging signs to show that we are on the border of a New Age ; we witness the baptism of a New Humanity. Asia has awakened to the impact of Western Civilization ; Europe is beginning to be aware of the Call of the East. Scientific inventions and investigations, and the larger spirit of toleration are bringing the nations and races within the zone of a common world-intercourse and here in India you behold the marvellous spectacle of the contact of races and religions of East and West. In this great experiment to bring together diverse types of culture and religious ideals, God calls the Brahmo Samaj to play a great part. Will she give answer to the Call ? The note of the New Age has been struck : it is the note of Harmony ; World-religions are seeking points of contact. In the economic world, too, efforts are being put forth to have combination in the place of *competition*. In the political world, there is a tendency towards arbitration and the Palace of Peace is to be opened at the Hague in

1913. The time is auspicious, and the world is waiting to give response to the Message of Harmony. And speaking to you from this obscure retreat in Sind let me ask : Won't you rise to a vision of the Larger Work before you ? It is no provincial dialect in which my message will speak to you to-day. Won't you be loyal to the great heritage which is yours as members of the Theistic Church ? Won't you remember that she is called to enter upon a new expansive period of her life ? Remember the new world-civilization for which the world cries with a piteous cry is the brotherly civilization—a civilization charged with the dynamic of Spiritual Idealism. Remember the World-Spirit summons the church to a world-broad ministry in the twentieth century. Will she be faithful to her World-Idea, her World-Mission ? The day of trial for her is come ; her hold on the public life is weakening ; her ranks show little numerical strength ; and as the tide of secularism is rising, the validity of her Ideals is being questioned as it seldom was before. The day of her trial is at hand.

Do I speak in a pessimistic strain this time ? I tremble, I do not despair. I tremble lest we betray the trust—the Sacred Trust. I tremble lest we forget the deeper world-values of the Brahmo Church. But the soul within me swells with a song of Hope that the World-Spirit still

will press her in the service of the Race. Not in vain did the great Teachers from the days of Ram-mohun Roy to those of the Maharshi and the 'Minister' and the mystic Mazumdar labour and suffer for the Sacred Cause. Great has been her share in the sufferings, which are the seed of Progress ; great too is her privilege to serve the Race. She asks us to enter the *social-process* ; she asks us to give up national pride and national hate ; she invites us to the vision of *Humanism*, the vision of the Holy Spirit in all nations and all races and all religions : She invites us to a Communion with the Sacred Past no less than with the spirit of the Living Present. She calls us to Unity, Solidarity, Fellowship ; She calls us to the Service of the God-in-man. Her music is not yet over ; for still when my heart is weary and I cry with a mournful cry 'till the last moon droop and the last tide fail' and I wonder and wait like the sea, still I catch as often I caught in my lonely wanderings in the West—the silver strains of her mystical *mantra* which I am tempted to quote as I close :—*Brahma Kripahi Kevalam, Brahma Kripahi Kevalam, Brahma Kripahi Kevalam.*

“Alone the Grace of God abideth
 Alone the Grace of God
 The Grace of God alone abideth”
 And may that grace abide with you !

BUSINESS SESSION 1911.

The business session of the All-India Theistic Conference was held on the 29th December, 1911, at 7-30 A.M. with the President in the chair. A large number of delegates and visitors were present. After Divine Service conducted by Rai Bahadur Madhusudan Rao of Cuttack, the President called upon the General Secretary, Babu Hemchandra Sarkar to read the Annual Report and Accounts, which will be found elsewhere. Dr. V. Rai proposed that the Report and Accounts be adopted; the proposal was seconded by Dr. D. N. Mullick and was accepted unanimously.

The following resolution was then put from the chair and was unanimously accepted, the whole audience standing:—

The All-India Theistic Conference offers its most loyal homage to Their Most Gracious Imperial Majesties, and invokes the blessing of God on their sojourn in their Indian Dominions and on their reign.

The second resolution which was also put from the chair and accepted unanimously was as follows:—

That this Conference records with profound sorrow its sense of the great loss sustained by the Theistic Church of India by the recent deaths of H. H. the late Maharaja Sir Nripendra Narain Bhup Bahadur of Cooch Behar, Mr. Ambica Charan Sen, Pandit Preonath Sastri and Babu Prakash Chandra Roy and conveys its sincere condolences to the bereaved families.

Babu Abinash Chandra Mazumdar next moved that the draft Constitution submitted to the last Conference and circulated among the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes, and amended by the Standing and the Subjects Committees in the light of the opinions of the Samajes received, be adopted. It was seconded by Mr. R. K. Das. The General Secretary then read the draft Constitution and the Conference proceeded to consider it clause by clause. The first clause was adopted unani-

mously. The second clause being taken up for consideration Babu Prasanna Kumar Das Gupta moved the amendment that the following words be added to clause 2 "by organising an All-India Theistic Mission." It was seconded by Babu Mahendra Kumar Sen Gupta. Babu Sarat Chandra Banerjee also proposed an amendment. Both the amendments were lost and the clause as it was in the original draft was adopted. As the discussion was taking up much time Mr. A.P. Patro of Berhampur (Ganjam) moved that the entire Constitution be put to vote *en-bloc*. The proposal was seconded by Mr. D. V. Prakash Rao of Cocanada and carried by a large majority and the following Constitution was finally adopted :—

1. The Conference shall be called the All-India Theistic Conference.

2. Its object shall be promotion of Theism and service of humanity by bringing together its adherents from different parts of India on suitable occasions and by other means.

3. All persons duly elected delegates by any Theistic organisation and persons elected by the Standing or the Reception Committee of the Conference, shall be considered its members for the year following. All members, except those who are missionaries, shall have to pay a delegation fee of at least a rupee ; the Reception and the Standing Committees, however, shall have power to exempt any member from such fee at their discretion.

4. The work of the Conference shall be carried on by a Standing Committee, consisting of the President of the previous Conference, ten members and one, or if necessary two Secretaries, who will be *ex-officio* members. (Ten members to be selected ordinarily 1 from Bombay, 1 from Madras, 1 from the Punjab, 1 from the U. P. or the C. P., 1 from Behar, 1 from Assam and 4 from Bengal). The Committee and the Secretaries shall be elected annually by the Conference and shall hold office till the appointment of their successors at the next Conference.

5. The Standing Committee will organise the annual session of the Conference, keep records of its proceedings, submit annual reports and accounts, try to give effect to the Resolutions of the Conference and do any other work that the Conference might entrust it with.

The standing Committee will have power to organise a local Reception Committee consisting of representatives of Theistic organisations in the province, where the Conference of the year will be held, delegating to it such of its powers as it will think fit, for co-operation in the work of the year.

6. The Standing Committee in consultation with the Reception Committee shall nominate a President who shall be finally elected by the Conference.

7. Any change in the Constitution may be made at a general meeting of the Conference by a majority of two-thirds of the members present.

The following other Resolutions were also adopted:—

IV. Resolved that a permanent Reserve Fund be created with the surplus of the annual Conferences, out of which the Standing Committee will have power to spend an amount not exceeding Rs. 100 for current expenses.

Proposed by Dr. D. N. Mullick.

Seconded by Babu Prasanna Kumar Das Gupta.

Carried unanimously.

V. Resolved that this Conference thinks it desirable that endeavours should be made to hold provincial conferences in the various provinces of India, wherever practicable.

Proposed by Dr. V. Rai.

Seconded by Mr. Koland Velu Pillai.

Supported by Babu Lalit Mohan Das.

Carried unanimously.

VI. Resolved that this Conference thinks it desirable to invite the International Congress of Liberal Religion to hold a session in India at an early date

and that the Standing Committee be requested to communicate with the various religious bodies in and outside India and to submit a report at the next Conference.

Proposed by Dr. D. N. Mullick.

Seconded by Babu Rajani Kanta Guha.

Supported by Mr. D. V. Prokash Rao (Madras)
 „ „ L. M. Satoor (Bombay)

VII. Resolved that the standing Committee be requested to take a census of the Brahmos in India with a special reference to the educational requirements of their children.

Proposed by Mr. Koland Valu Pillai.

Seconded by Babu Madhusudan Sen.

VIII. Resolved that the Conference cordially approves the Bill introduced by the Hon. Babu B. N. Bose, to amend Act III of 1872.

Proposed by Mr. A. P. Patro.

Seconded by Babu Rajchandra Chowdhuri.

IX. Resolved that this Conference accords its support to the main principles of the Primary Education Bill of Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale now before the Imperial Legislative Council.

Proposed by Mr. Ram Krishna Rao.

Seconded by Babu Lalit Mohan Das.

Supported by Babu Satis Chandra Ghose.

X. Resolved that this Conference expresses its cordial sympathy with the efforts to uplift the depressed classes and commends the existing organisations for that object to the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes for their hearty and liberal support.

Proposed by Babu Guru Das Chakravarty.

Seconded by Mr. R. K. Das.

XI. Babu Maheshchandra Bhowmic moved that the Conference humbly prays that the Government may be pleased to allot a liberal grant towards the support of these Depressed Classes Mission. It was seconded by Mr. Kalyan Swami and carried unanimously.

XII. Mr. R.K. Das proposed and Babu Satis Chandra Ghose seconded that Babu Hemchandra Sarkar be appointed the General Secretary for the next year. It was carried by acclamation.

Babu Rajanikanta Guha proposed and Babu Lalit-mohan Das seconded that Babu Devedranath Sen be appointed the Joint General Secretary for the next year.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

The following gentlemen were elected members of the Standing Committee :—

Messrs. V. R. Shinde, R. Venkat Ratnam, A. C. Mazumdar, Bhuban Mohan Roy, Biswanath Kar, Nilmani Chakrabarty, Sudhindranath Tagore, D. N. Mullick, Rajatnath Roy and Satis Chandra Ghose.

A Vote of thanks to the Volunteers—Proposed by Babu R. K. Guha.

A Vote of thanks to the Reception Committee—Proposal by Mr. Koland Velu Pillai.

A Vote of thaks to the Chair—Proposed by Rev. Braja Gopal Neogi, seconded by Babu Gurudas Chakravarty.

A Vote of thanks to the Standing Committee—Proposed by Babu Lalitmohan Das.

SOCIAL GATHERING AND ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR OTTO.

The proceedings of the Conference ended with a Social Gathering in the Mary Carpenter Hall on the 29th evening. It was very largely attended both by ladies and gentlemen. The ladies gave several concerts and Brahmo young men served refreshments to the guests. All spent a very enjoyable evening. An interesting feature of the evening's proceedings was an address by Prof. Rudolph Otto of Gottingen giving his impressions of the Brahmo Samaj.

In some way and degree, he said, there was a parallelism between the work of the Brahmo Samaj here and of the struggle of modern and liberal Theology against Orthodoxy and reaction in Germany. He admired the strong and deep feeling and spirit of unity and companionship amongst the members of the Brahmo Samaj, and could not see, that "individualism" was overstrong amongst them, as some friends were afraid of. The effort to bring the work from the educated and higher classes of Indian Society to the lower ones, was most praiseworthy and had to be done by all means available, as any true and real church always had to be built up from the bottom to the roof, but that at the same time the Brahmo Samaj was quite right to make every effort not to lose

hold of the educated classes, if it earnestly meant to become the leader of India's religious and higher spiritual development. In this latter regard, it seemed to him, that the intellectual and doctrinal side of the work might somewhat more be emphasised and worked out without neglecting, of course, the emotional one, which was so strong and deep in Brahmo Samaj—service and worship. In this regard Professor Wellinkar's suggestion appeared to him of highest importance, that there should be one or more leading men of strong intellectual capacity specially appointed to do the work of lecturing (Gaskell-lecturer), of working out the philosophical and theological basis of belief, of educating preachers and teachers. He admired and appreciated fully the value of English education and thought, with old Indian wisdom and culture. Still he ventured to suggest, if it might not be useful to supplement it from the side of old and modern German thinking too. He had seen the figures of Goethe and Schiller in the reading room of the City College. For people, so well versed in English language and literature it would be only a short and easy way to read Goethe and Schiller in their own language and to have an experience of the world-embracing wisdom of old Goethe and the moral power and pathos of Schiller from the very sources. Especially the wide homilistic sermon literature of Betzius, Friedrich Nau-

mann, Dorries Traub and so many others of modern liberal German preachers and prophets might help to enrich and enlarge religious preaching and experience in India as they did now in Germany. He dared not to advise, as he was merely an outsider, but gave it as an opinion, if it might not be considered useful, to send out to Germany one or two young men, who after having finished thoroughly their Anglo-Indian education, might study for one or two years German philosophy, most of all, philosophy of religion, sociology and the work of social reform and at the same time the historical parts of modern German theology, giving an idea of that infinite and manifold religious and ethical experience in past and present, which quickens, fertilizes and deepens one's own experience and which alone can save one from sinking into one-sidedness and poverty of religious thought and feeling. He wished to the Brahmo Samaj and to its work the blessing of Him, "whom you seek and long for in the East, as we seek and long for Him in the West."

Babu Heremba Chandra Maitra, on behalf of the assembly, thanked Prof. Otto for his very valuable and suggestive address.

List of Contributions to the funds of the Calcutta session—1911. of the All-India Theistic Conference.

1.	Cachar Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
2.	Quetta Sadharan Brahmo Samaj	...	...	20	0	0
3.	E. B. Brahmo Samaj (Dacca)...	...	...	15	0	0
4.	Babu Ananta Narayan Sen	...	...	2	0	0
5.	" Sarat Kumar Lahiri	...	...	10	0	0
6.	" Ramananda Chatterjee...	...	...	5	0	0
7.	" Surendranath Mallik	...	...	10	0	0
8.	" Annada Charan Sen	...	...	1	0	0
9.	" Bani Kanta Ray Choudhury	...	...	1	0	0
10.	" Gagan Chandra Hom	...	...	3	0	0
11.	" Anath Bandhu Sarkar	...	...	2	0	0
12.	" Aswini Kumar Burman...	...	...	5	0	0
13.	" Narendra Nath Mukerjee	...	...	10	0	0
14.	Dr. P. C. Ray	...	...	15	0	0
15.	Messrs Abdul Gafur Taritmohan Gupta Kalikisore Choudhury	}	...	2	0	0
16.	Mr. J. Ghosal		...	5	0	0
17.	" C. R. Dass		...	50	0	0
18.	Dr. D. N. Maitra	...	...	10	0	0
19.	Mr. P. N. Dutta	...	...	25	0	0
20.	" D. V. Madgaokar	...	...	25	0	0
21.	" S. B. Majumdar	...	...	20	0	0
22.	" B. M. Chatterjee	...	...	5	0	0
23.	Dr. Sailendra Kumar Gupta	...	...	2	0	0
24.	Rai Sahib Phanindra Mohan Bose	...	...	1	0	0
25.	Mr. S. N. Tagore	...	...	50	0	0
26.	Mr. S. M. Bose	...	...	20	0	0
27.	Mr. P. Chaudhuri	...	...	20	0	6
28.	" S. C. Gupta	...	...	10	0	0
29.	" K. P. Bosu	...	...	10	0	0
30.	" P. R. Das	...	...	10	0	0
31.	Prof. B. N. Sen	...	...	10	0	0
32.	Dr. D. N. Ray	...	...	50	0	0
33.	Dr. S. K. Nag	...	...	5	0	0
34.	Mrs. P. C. Das	...	...	10	0	0
35.	Mrs. K. N. Ray	...	...	10	0	0

36.	Mr. Nisit Chandra Sen	...	...	10	0	0
37.	Babu Rabindra Nath Tagore	...	...	50	0	0
38.	" Sasipada Banerjee	...	...	1	0	0
39.	" Sitanath Datta	...	...	1	0	0
40.	" Kali Narayan Ray	...	...	3	0	0
41.	" Lalitmohan Das	...	...	3	0	0
42.	" Gurucharan Mahalanabish	...	...	4	0	0
43.	" Sisir Kumar Bose	...	...	2	0	0
44.	" Manindra Nath Bose	...	...	1	0	0
45.	" Amrita Lal Ghosh	...	...	10	0	0
46.	" Dharendra Lal Khastgir	...	...	10	0	0
47.	" Khiteendranath Tagore	...	...	10	0	0
48.	Dr. R. C. Nag	...	...	5	0	0
49.	Mr. B. L. Choudhury	...	...	20	0	0
50.	" P. K. Ray Chaudhury	...	...	10	0	0
51.	" S. C. Mahalanabis	...	...	3	0	0
52.	" R. N. Ray	...	...	25	0	0
53.	" U. Ray	...	...	10	0	0
54.	" B. De	...	...	10	0	0
55.	" S. R. Das	...	...	20	0	0
56.	" J. R. Das	...	...	15	0	0
57.	" J. C. Gupta	...	...	10	0	0
58.	Mis Charulata Sen	...	...	1	0	0
59.	" Swarnalata Das	...	...	1	0	0
60.	Dr. D. R. Das	...	...	2	0	0
61.	" G. C. Das	...	...	1	0	0
62.	" B. K. Chatterjee	...	...	5	0	0
63.	Prof. Paresh Nath Sen	...	...	5	0	0
64.	Mr. & Mrs Suprasanna Ray	...	...	15	0	0
65.	Mr. Jagannath Rao	...	...	10	0	0
66.	" H. Bose	...	...	20	0	0
67.	" J. M. Bose	...	...	5	0	0
68.	" K. B. Dutta	...	...	25	0	0
69.	" J. C. Mukerjee	...	...	10	0	0
70.	" R. N. Sen	...	...	10	0	0
71.	" H. K. Ghose	...	...	2	0	0
72.	" P. K. Sen	...	...	10	0	0
73.	" S. P. Singha	...	...	100	0	0
74.	" I. B. Sen	...	...	5	0	0
75.	" M. N. B.	...	...	1	0	0
76.	Dr. Hiralal Halder	...	...	5	0	0
77.	Miss H. Bose	...	...	2	0	0
78.	Dr. M. L. Mitra	...	...	25	0	0
	" Nilratan Sirkar	...	...	50	0	0
	" Matilal Mukerjee	...	...	2	0	0
	" R. L. Dutta	...	...	50	0	0

82.	„ Dunichand	...	...	2	0	0
83.	„ D. N. Chatterjee	...	...	5	0	0
84.	Mr. B. D. Bose	...	...	10	0	0
85.	Babu Mahesh Chandra Bhowmik	...	...	3	0	0
86.	Mr. and Mrs. K. K. Dutta	...	...	5	0	0
87.	Babu Mohendranath Sarkar	...	...	5	0	0
88.	„ Jnanendranath Chatterji	...	...	5	0	0
89.	Dr. D. N. Mallik	...	...	15	0	0
90.	Babu Sasibhushan Dutta	...	...	4	0	0
91.	„ Prasannakumar Das Gupta	...	...	5	0	0
92.	„ Kanailal Sen	...	...	2	0	0
93.	„ Shymacharan Sen	...	...	1	0	0
94.	„ Hiralal Sarkar	...	...	1	0	0
95.	„ Rajanikanta Guha	...	...	2	0	0
96.	„ Birendranath Deb	...	...	1	0	0
97.	„ Kulada Rajan Ray	...	...	2	0	0
98.	Mr. S. Y. Javere	...	...	3	0	0
99.	„ Surendralal Ray	...	...	3	0	0
100.	Mr. Girishchandra Dey	...	...	15	0	0
101.	Dr. D. Basu	...	...	20	0	0
102.	Babu Bijoykrishna Bose	...	...	5	0	0
103.	„ Surendranath Tagore	...	...	25	0	0
104.	„ Bamapada Chatterji	...	...	5	0	0
105.	„ Harakanta Bose	...	...	2	0	0
106.	Sir R. N. Mukerjee	...	...	100	0	0
107.	Dr. B. C. Ghosh	...	...	5	0	0
108.	„ J. C. Bose	...	...	25	0	0
109.	„ P. R. Roy	...	...	5	0	0
110.	Dr. S. K. Datta	...	...	25	0	0
111.	Babu Heramba Chandra Maitra	...	...	15	0	0
112.	Sealkote Sadharan Brahmo Samaj	...	...	2	0	0
113.	Darjeeling Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
114.	Midnapur „	...	...	5	0	0
115.	Bhagalpur „	...	...	5	0	0
116.	Rajahmundry „	...	...	5	0	0
117.	Mymensing „	...	...	5	0	0
118.	Mangalore „	...	...	25	0	0
119.	Ranchi „	...	...	5	0	0
120.	Bangalore Cant. „	...	...	5	0	0
121.	Kumarkhali „	...	...	1	0	0
122.	Bombay Prarthana Samaj	...	...	20	0	0
123.	Contai Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
124.	Dinajpur „	...	...	5	0	0
125.	Burdwan „	...	...	5	0	0
126.	Vinukunda Prarthana Samaj	...	...	2	0	0
127.	Deoghar Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0

128.	Narsapur Prarthana Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
129.	Howrah Brahmo Samaj	...	...	3	0	0
130.	Kakina	...	...	5	0	0
131.	Bangalore City Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
132.	Bankipur N. D. Samaj	...	...	9	0	0
133.	„ Brahmo Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
134.	Barisal	...	...	10	0	0
135.	Hyderabad (Scindh) Brahmo Samaj	...	...	10	0	0
136.	Guntur Prarthana Samaj	...	...	5	0	0
137.	Pittapur	...	...	3	0	0
138.	Berhampur	...	...	5	0	0



NO.	YEAR.	PLACE.	PRESIDENT.	CHAIRMAN OF THE R. COMM.	SECRETARIES.
1	1888	Allahabad	Hon'ble Mr. M. G. Ranade	Babu Dwijendranath Tagore	Pandit S. N. Sastri
2	1889	Bombay	Rev. P. C. Mozoomdar		Pandit Nabin Ch. Roy
3	1890	Calcutta	Mr. Gunabhiram Baruah		Pandit S. N. Sastri
4	1891	Nagpur			V. K. Modok &)
5	1892	Allahabad	Mr. B. B. Nagarkar		S. P. Kelkar.)
6	1894	Madras	Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar		
7	1895	Poona			
8	1896	Calcutta	Mr. M. G. Ranade		
9	1898	Madras	Mr. Viresalingam Pantulu		
10	1901	Calcutta	Mr. N. G. Chandavarkar	Mr. Satyendranath Tagore	Mr. U. C. Datta & }
11	1902	Ahmedabad	Dr. Bhandarkar		Mr. H. C. Sarkar }
					Mr. Ramanbhai
12	1904	Bombay	Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar	Mr. N. G. Chandavarkar	Mr. V. R. Shinde
13	1905	Benares	Pandit S. N. Sastri	Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahani	Promotho Lall Sen
14	1906	Calcutta	Mr. R. Venkata Ratnam	Maharaja of Mayurbhanj	Hem Chandra Sarkar
15	1907	Surat	Mr. S. N. Tagore	Lal Shankar Umiya Sankar	Mr. V. R. Shinde
16	1908	Madras	Babu Abinash Ch. Mazumdar	Ullal Raghunathaya	
17	1909	Lahore	Babu B. N. Sen	Lala Khashiram	Mr. A. C. Mazumdar
18	1910	Allahabad	Pandit S. N. Sastri	Babu Nilmani Dhar	Babu Hem "Ch. Sarkar
19	1911	Calcutta	Mr. Ullal Raghunathaya.	" Herambachandra Maitra	Rev. Brojogopal Neogi



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